

Tropical coral reefs are in short supply around Beijing, but there are still opportunities to don an aqualung and shake hands with a fish... **Page 16**



Christina seemed to be quite accustomed to Chinese tradition, preferring tea to coffee when we met in a cafe. **Page 9**



Kunqu Opera, one of China's most influential theatrical traditions, has been listed as a cultural heritage. **Page 10**

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Deputy Mayor Tackles First Review



Yue Fuhong

Photo by Jakey

Facing an audience of more than 200 on Friday morning, Yue Fuhong, deputy mayor of Beijing, has become one of the first Chinese ranking officials to go through an all-round review by delegates from the municipal people's congress.

Yue finished his work report. Then came the highlight of the conference — each of the 20 delegates made a 10-minute review of Yue's performance.

"As a deputy mayor elected by the people, I am obligated to accept the supervision of the municipal people's congress and its delegates," Yue said. Xu Renfa was the first to air his point of view toward the senior official.

"As the deputy mayor in charge of rural work," Xu said, "he has made remarkable contributions to the fast economic development in Beijing's outskirts since he took office in 1997."

Xu said Yue has proven himself an invaluable public servant. A bell rang indicating Xu had no more time to narrate his opinions. Xu asked for a few more minutes to illustrate his dissatisfaction with certain negative aspects, ranging from farmers' excess tax burdens to disappointing social order in the suburbs. Many delegates mentioned problems for farmers' well being, such as water shortages, heavy taxes and illegal exploitation of cropland.

Yue took detailed notes of the frank criticisms and suggestions. Once a high-school teacher, Yue, 51, used to be the head of a county affiliated to Beijing.

With the preparation work initiated two months ago, the review conference has aroused wide public attention and attracted citizens to attend.

"I just want to see how the people's congress reviews a senior administrative official," said Yuan Huatao, a staff member of the Beijing-based China Aerospace Corporation. "In the past, ordinary citizens had no opportunity to attend such a conference," he added, saying "now we have the right and obligation to do so." (Xinhua)



Demolition begins.

Photo by Wang Zhenlong

CBD Blast Off

By Zhao Hongyi

A booming explosion at 2 pm, June 21 marked the start of land clearing for the construction of Beijing's long-discussed Central Business District (CBD).

The first block cleared of a 12,000 -square-meter site used to be part of a mill of Beijing No.1 Machinery Factory, on the southwest side of the Dabeiyao junction.

The land made available by the controlled blast on June 21 will be used for the first phase of the construction of Jianwai Soho, a compound of residential houses and office buildings.

According to the preliminary initiative drawn by the Beijing Central Business District (CBD) Construction and Administration Office, the total construction area will be more than 10 million square meters, of which 7 million square meters will be used for relocation of former enterprises and residents.

There are 39 enterprises and some residential communities located in the area. The municipal and CBD authorities are now in full discussion with experts and related institutions for removal and relocation of enterprises and residents. A final decision will be publicized in August.

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: PANG LEI



Gayle Hall and companions walk up a section of Badaling Great Wall few tourists see.

Photo by Guo Tieliu

Wild Wall Dream Starts Here

American adventurer tests volunteers for epic journey

By Guo Tieliu/Xia Lei

An American woman plans to walk along the Great Wall from its start — Jiayuguan — to its end — Shanhaiguan — next March.

On June 24 at the Badaling section of the Great Wall in Beijing, Gayle Hall tested Chinese volunteers who want to join her in making the trip.

"Walking along the Great Wall is my dream," said Hall. "It will change my world." The city media has previously reported her intention.

After several rounds of rough tests, 20 vol-

unteers were selected for final evaluation. Hall said she would choose a final four. "But if more people are qualified, maybe more than four," she said.

The 20 volunteers walked 20 kilometers at Badaling on June 24 for the test. All arrived at the destination before 3 pm. Hall was satisfied with those volunteers, but the final winners had not been selected. The standards were very strict in her mind.

"You should be a person of good will, endurance and possess a spirit of teamwork," she said.

Mr. Jin took the test. He said he liked outdoor

sports, especially mountain climbing. Once he traveled through the Shennongjia non-human district, a nature reserve in Hubei Province.

Hall's future trip sounds less easy. "It would be a challenge for me if selected," said Jin, "but it would bring me great excitement."

Mr. Chen, from Yunnan province, also took the test. He had asked two days' leave of absence from his company. "I have never tried this before. If I was selected, there would be some time for further training. I have prepared to face the challenge. It would be a proud achievement if I could walk the whole Great Wall."

Non-Person Number One Speaks Out

Sina boss back at work as 'artificial person'

By Zhao Xu/Xia Lei

After nearly three weeks' silence, the non-person spoke out.

"I never said I would resign as CEO, president and member of the board of directors of Sina.com," said Wang Zhidong at 2:50 pm on Monday.

He announced this at a press conference held at Telecom Hotel in Beijing. Wang's American lawyer Nicolas Groffman confirmed Wang had never submitted a letter of resignation.

Three hours earlier, Wang had shown up at the Beijing headquarters of Sina dressed as an employee of Beijing Sina ICP Company, an Internet content company housed in the same building. As Wang owns 70 percent of Sina ICP stock, security personnel had no choice but let him in.

The Sina board had previously on the same day announced Wang's titles of CEO,



Non-person Wang talks to the media.

Photo by Jiang Fei

president and member of the board of directors were terminated. Mao Daolin was appointed CEO and a member of the board of directors. Wang Yan was appointed Sina.com president.

"In fact, other members of the board announced that they would change the CEO on June 1," said Wang Zhidong. "But they did not give me any notification in written

or oral form. I was given no opportunity to discuss this issue with them.

"I am confused and shocked by their decision. Even now, I have not yet received a single word directly from them."

He also warned not to trust rumors reported as facts in local media. Because of legal factors and business secrets, he said he could not go public with his side of the story yet.

According to well-informed sources, Wang is still an "artificial person" — fake employee — of Beijing Sina ICP, with 70 percent of its stock. As a domestic company but part of Sina.com, the firm had not been listed on the Nasdaq for legal reasons. Wang asked Groffman to study the case and look for loopholes used by others against him.

"Whether I sue them or not depends on the results of my investigation," said Wang.

In response to Wang's words at the conference, Jiang Fengnian, chairman of the board of directors at Sina.com, said as an artificial person, Wang has the right to continue working at Sina.com. But if he affects the operation of the company, Sina.com will not accept that.

Jiang also said Sina is exploring the possibility of buying the 70 percent stock of Beijing Sina ICP Company from Wang. ("Dotcomer Wang," see Page 3)

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New Pattern of Beijing

One Line and Two Wings will be developed

By Li Jingli

In the Mayor Forum of Chinese Cities in 21st Century, the third mayor representatives conference held by the Chinese Mayor Association in June 24, Meng Xuenong, standing deputy mayor of Beijing, gave a speech on the construction of a modern international city with Chinese characteristics, in which he explained the future pattern of

Beijing.

According to Meng, Beijing will be developed in a One Line and Two Wings pattern in the future. One Line refers to the central line from north to south, connecting Tian'anmen, the Forbidden City, Asian Olympic Games Village, and also the Olympic Village and Olympic Park which are still under construction. While Two Wings refer to the Zhongguancun Park in the

west and the Central Business District in the east. Since the CBD is the major area under construction both at present and in the future, its planning and construction becomes a crucial issue in Beijing's efforts to become a modern international city.

Zhongguancun Science and Technology Park includes five parts: Haidian district focusing on electronics information technology,

biology engineering and pharmaceutical industry; Fengtai district specialized in aerospace & aviation and electricity; Changping park concentrating on environment protection and the development of new energies; Yizhuang oriented by open economics; Electronics City which will become the base for research and development, production and exportation of electronic information industry.

Meng also described the bright future of CBD. The general planning of CBD is expected to finish by the end of July, and specific planning of different parts will be completed by the end of this year. CBD will be developed into a modern business center.

Its functions will include finance and insurance, information consulting, business exhibition, office, hotel and entertainment.

Chinese Soy Sauce Safe for Seasoning

The Chinese soy sauce industry has hit back at claims from a United Kingdom food watchdog that several Chinese products contain unsafe levels of cancer-causing chemicals.

Dou Bingyi, vice-chairman with the China Seasoning Association, said all legitimate soy sauce products in China do not contain high levels of cancer-causing chemicals.

According to Dou, the State standard is higher than the UK's on the quality of soy sauce, including the contents of 3-MCPD.

"The government strictly controls soy sauce quality, and the companies that have export rights usually make better products," he said.

Chinese people have eaten soy sauce for generations with no evidence that they suffer from more cancer as a result, he said.

The UK Food Standards Agency (FSA) warned consumers



One of the products named in the report.

Photo by Chen Shuyi

to avoid 22 kinds of soy sauce products, imported from Thailand, the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan after finding high levels of 3-MCPD.

The State General Administration for Quality Supervision and Inspection and Quarantine refused to make official comment on the charge.

"The sensational reports of many British tabloids have caused fear of Chinese soy sauce and Chinese food among ordinary British people," said an official, who

refused to be named.

He questioned the accuracy of the FSA tests, as samples were taken from products manufactured two years ago.

However, he emphasized that the remarks were his personal views.

According to Wang Shenzu, from Hong Kong, soy sauce maker Lee Kum Kee's Guangzhou company, whose five products are on the FSA list, the samples FSA tested were made before October 1999, when the company took steps to modify its production process.

Wang said the government had never found detectable levels of 3-MCPD in its product.

Lin Jian, a quality-control officer at Jammy Chai (Guangzhou) Food Co. Ltd., also named by the FSA, said his company had not exported soy sauce to Britain in recent years.

"You can be sure that those brands are not ours," he said.

(Xinhua)



Huge Funds to Repair Sakya Monastery

China will invest huge funds to repair the Sakya Monastery in Tibet. The monastery is the main temple of Sakya sect, one of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

Xinhua Photo

BCTV to Merge with BTV

By Li Jinli

July 1 will be the last day for Beijing Cable Television Station. On June 24, BCTV announced that it would merge with Beijing TV Station, effective July 1, which would lead the Beijing television industry to a new era. The merger is a necessary step for the Beijing television industry to face the new situation and improve competitiveness just ahead of China's entry into WTO. After the merger, the existing channels of the two stations, three wireless channels and four cable channels, will remain. The seven channels include news-oriented comprehensive channel, arts channel, education channel, movie channel, finance channel, sports channel, and life channel.

Horns Banned within Fourth Ring Road

By Gao Shan/Yang Guoping

With the opening of the Fourth Ring Road, some changes have been made to Beijing's Traffic Regulations.

From July 1, 2001, cargo vehicles are not allowed to drive within the Third Ring Road from 7:00 am to midnight; Motorbikes with license plates for anywhere other than metro-Beijing are banned from all main roads within the Fourth Ring Road. Horns are not allowed to be used within the Fourth Ring Road.

After the opening of the Fourth Ring Road, some violations of traffic regulations have occurred around some residential and business districts on the western and northern section of the road. The police have taken some measures to tackle the problems, such as set up some cameras to monitor the speed of the cars.

Beijing Expands Green Belts

By Huang Yong

Beijing had fulfilled the afforestation target of 4.135 million trees on 2800 hectares on its major city rings by the end-April, 123% of the annual target.

It is expected that the city will finish greening another 206 hectares in the autumn, making the annual afforested acreage to 3100 hectares.

The tree survival rate hit 94.2%. The city plans to green 125 square kilometers of the city rings in the coming three or four years, 25 square kilometers more than the original target.

BEIJING TODAY

Beijing Today is a local English Language newspaper run by Beijing Youth Daily. It published its first issue on May 11, 2001.

Editors and Reporters

The 21st World University Students' Games (21st Universiade) will be held in Beijing this August, and Beijing Today will publish a newspaper for the athletes during the event.



Ratified by the Talent Market Management Office of Beijing Personnel Bureau, we are seeking 15 editors and reporters for Beijing Today and the Athletes Village Newspaper. Applicants should be:

1. Beijing residents
2. Holders of at least a Bachelor degree in English
3. Computer literate
4. Below 35 years old
5. Interested in journalism

Please send you Curriculum Vitae, copy of ID and education certificate to: Beijing Today Department of Beijing Youth Daily; Building A, No. 23, Baijiazhuang Dongli, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100026, China. You can also send a fax to 65902525 or e-mail bjtoday@ynet.com and bjtoday@sina.com. Deadline for application: July 5, 2001.

Jiuzhaigou Caps Tourist Numbers

By Li Jingli

The regulatory authority of Jiuzhaigou Valley has decided that the number of tourists will be limited to 12,000 per day in order to protect the natural environment, an official from the Jiuzhaigou Scenery and Land Site Regulatory Bureau said. This step will make Jiuzhaigou the first sight spot in China to have control on the number of tourists.

Jiuzhaigou, 400 kilometers or so from the city of Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province, presents some of the most beautiful landscape in the world. In 1978 the State Council approved to create a national reserve here. In 1992, UNESCO accepted the reserve as a World Heritage Site.

Zhou Xiaoling said in an interview, the main purpose of setting up the new restriction, which will be effective on July 1, is to protect the unique ecosystems and pre-

cious Wildlife of Jiuzhaigou valley.

As the tourism industry develops, more and more people choose to travel during long holidays, yet too many tourists would too great an impact on the natural environment. For example, Zhou said, during this Labor holiday, on May 3, there were around 30,000 tourists in the valley, including those who were there the day before. China gives people a seven-day holiday on Labor Day and National Day in order to stim-

ulate the economy.

She said, the maximum capacity of Jiuzhaigou valley is to hold 12,000 to 15,000 tourists. If the number goes beyond that level, it will become too crowded. But she also added that usually the number of tourists could not reach that amount unless it is a seven-day holiday. In addition, as the road in the valley is not a loop one, it can hardly handle too crowded traffic, she said.



Delicate karst formations at Jiuzhaigou.

File photo

Dotcomer Wang Zhidong "I'll be back!"

By Yang Xiao

Wang Zhidong appeared at a press conference with his attorney on June 25 to break his silence on his unceremonious dismissal from Sina.com, saying, like Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Terminator*, "I'll be back!"

At the press conference, Wang implied that he would buy back a controlling stake of Sina.com. Sina is currently valued at \$90 million. Wang Zhidong owns 7%, 80% is owned by foreign interests. If Wang can acquire another 7%, he will become the biggest shareholder. Since June 8, he has been busy raising money to this end. Already one Chinese IT company has indicated that it will lend Wang sufficient capital.

Even though most commentators say he is embarking on a mission impossible, Wang has a second card up his sleeve; he possesses 70% of Beijing Sina, a branch of Sina.com. China currently bars foreign investment in Internet content providers (ICP), so in 1999, to pave the way for Sina.com's IPO on the NASDAQ, Sina.com abstracted its local business, as a result Beijing Sina is a separate entity to Sina.com.

Therefore, the board has no power to dismiss Wang Zhidong from the position of president of Beijing Sina. However Beijing Sina has the ICP license for China's mainland and is Sina.com's main source of income. This Monday ex-CEO Wang Zhidong came to work at the Beijing Sina office. "Sina.com is currently faced with grave challenges to its business. I believe it is my duty to stand with all employees to get through the hard times. It would be an irresponsible act to resign at this crucial moment," he said. His action is in accordance with the law and the contract. Since that day, the board has lost control of the content on Sina.com, as can be seen from the pro-Wang Zhidong slant of the homepage.

The conflict continues. On Tuesday Sina.com's board formally dismissed Wang from his post. They claim that under the terms of Wang's contract, he is required to deliver all his shares to Sina.com if he quits his position as president of Beijing Sina. Wang maintains the contract is illegal, and is preparing to sue the board. Hu Yanping, a Beijing IT commentator points out, "Even if Wang has limited ability to benefit Sina, he has the power to destroy it."



"Even if Wang has limited ability to benefit Sina, he has the power to destroy it."

Photo by Luke

China Hopeful about WTO Entry Talks

By James young



Shi Guangsheng

Photo by Jackey

Optimism

Last Saturday, foreign trade minister Shi Guangsheng told media that he was confident that multilateral talks on China's entry to the World Trade Organization would be wrapped up soon. On June 19, Shi flew to Brussels for talks with EU trade official Pascal Lamy. After 2 days of negotiations, he said China and the EU had finally reached consensus on issues holding up China's WTO entry. Similar agreements were reached with the United States earlier this month, and Shi said he was confident that China would be a member of the WTO by the end of this November.

Meanwhile China's top trade negotiator Long Yongtu said before leaving for Geneva on June 20, "We hope that with the understanding and support of all WTO members, the substantial talks on China's WTO accession can conclude comprehensively in the coming working group conference."

China and WTO members will meet for high-level multilateral talks in Geneva from June 28 to July 4. Analysts say work on China's accession protocol needed for entry could take three to six months to complete. Long Yongtu said he held a "positive attitude" regarding China becoming a full member before a meeting of WTO members in Doha, Qatar, in November.

Any country wishing to join the WTO must clear two hurdles. First, it must negotiate bilateral agreements with any WTO members asking for negotiations on market access. The second stage is multilateral talks with a WTO working party in Geneva that establishes the common rules of the club for China to enter the world trade watchdog.

Suspicion

Although the government is optimistic, WTO officials want China to shoulder more respon-



An advertisement showing US dollars in Beijing Financial District. Entry to the WTO will open up the financial and auto-manufacturing sectors in China.

Photo by Guang Niu

sibilities. The next WTO director general, Thailand's Supachai Panitchpakdi, insists that China and its multilateral trading partners need to iron out the details of China's entry into the global trading body with care, saying "If China joins the WTO on a weak foundation, then it will not be a helpful member of the WTO," he said.

Supachai says China should take the time to ensure institutional reforms are in place to ensure a smooth accession when it comes. "I see a lot of differences between the commitments (China has made) and the institutional reforms that China will have to put up," in order to comply with its WTO commitments, he said. "I want China to join the WTO as a strong member who can comply with, if not all, then 95 % to 99 % of its commitments," he added. China will have to open its doors to a wide variety of industries, and face greater foreign competition once the country joins the WTO, which will spark widespread lay-offs at the same time as creating new jobs, Supachai said.

Challenges

Once China joins the WTO, many industries will have to face challenges from outside. Professor Bai from the University of Foreign Economy & Trade participated in framing the plan for negotiations. He says China must formulate tactics to cope with the challenges. For example, in 5 years, overseas financial companies will be allowed in. This will have a deep impact on local financial systems. The media should stress the message that local banks are guaranteed by the government, while foreign banks are susceptible to bankruptcy.

Ma Yu, Senior Research Fellow from Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation takes a different stand. He agrees that China will face challenges after entering the WTO, but says it will be benefit from the monopoly like banks and automakers in China. They have to improve their service. "Even though China will open its doors to overseas financial companies, approval from the government is still required. Even if China lowers the tariffs on automobiles, restrictions on import numbers still apply. Therefore the impact is minimized".

Beijing has retaliated against Tokyo's farm import curbs by imposing prohibitively high tariffs on imports of Japanese automobiles, mobile phones and air conditioners. The 100 percent tariffs, imposed from June 22, affect 60 varieties of products from the three classes of Japanese goods. Imports of these goods were worth an estimated \$700 million last year.

An Eye for An Eye

By James Young

In Beijing, a MOFTEC representative said that Beijing was ready to seek a negotiated solution. "We hope both sides can resolve the problem through consultations," said the official, who declined to be identified. Beijing's move to impose the tariffs is in response to Japan's discriminatory treatment of some Chinese export products, in particular, the raising of import tariffs on Chinese farm goods, namely shiitake mushrooms, spring onions and straw for tatami mats.

Chairman of both Toyota Motors and the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association Hiroshi Okuda says the two countries should withdraw the measures and make efforts to reach a solution through diplomatic channels. Okuda says the tariffs effectively bar Japanese automakers from exporting vehicles to the world's most populous country, which could develop into a major problem for the auto industry and affect Japan's future business in China.

Echoing Okuda's view, a

spokesman for Mitsubishi Motors, Japan's fourth-largest automobile maker, said the company was "completely taken aback" by the move. "The imposition of extra import tariffs will have a major impact on Mitsubishi Motors' business in China, both at present and in terms of lost opportunities in the future," he said.

While these industry leaders have appealed for negotiations between the two countries, Toyota, Suzuki and many giant Japanese automakers stopped exporting to China since Tuesday to minimize the losses.

The Japanese government is already feeling the pain. On June 22 Tokyo calls Beijing's tariffs unjustifiable and says they violate WTO and bilateral agreements. A Chinese trade official says it is up to Japan to resolve the trade row.

This Monday Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Yutaka Kawashima announced Japan will send an expert-level government mission to China in the near future to protest Beijing's special tariffs taken in response to a Japanese emergency import curb.



Mitsubishi air-conditioners have a solid foothold in the Chinese market.

Photo by Cui Hao

CHRONOLOGY

On June 22 China slapped 100% tariffs on cars, mobile phones and air conditioners from Japan, the latest shot in a trade war that began with Japan's imposition of tariffs on certain Chinese farm goods. The following is a chronology of events leading to the current impasse:

- April 10: Japan raises import tariffs on Chinese goods including shiitake mushrooms, spring onions and straw for tatami mats. Temporary tariffs range from 106 percent for straw to 266 percent for mushrooms. The products, worth about \$100 million, are a fraction of the total Sino-Japanese trade worth \$83.2 billion in 2000.

- April 17 — May 17: Japanese chopstick makers, bicycle makers seek government protection against cheap imports from China. Japan's towel and eel industry request to curb cheap Chinese and Vietnamese imports too.

- June 7: Japan slaps temporary curbs on Chinese poultry due to bird flu concerns, a ban likely to last until authorities verify the safety of Chinese poultry products used in food.

- June 5: Chinese automakers say their applications to import Japanese cars have been rejected by Beijing, apparently due to Tokyo's curbs on Chinese farm imports.

- June 9: China imposes anti-dumping tariffs on imports of acrylate from Japan and the United States.

- June 19: Japan's necktie makers delay a request for curbs on Chinese neckties, although they say the industry is badly in need of protection. Tie sales have dwindled to half the annual earnings of a decade ago as imports from China surged.

- June 21: China sets 100 percent tariffs on cars, mobile phones and air conditioners from Japan, to take effect June 22.

Auto Price War Breaks out

By James Young

China's giant automaker Tianjin Xiali has quietly slashed the prices of its cars since June 24. One model has been cut by 15,000 yuan (\$1814) to 76,500 yuan (\$9250), while prices on other models have been reduced by 4,000 to 9,600 yuan. The move has had an immediate effect on the market. At an auto fair near the Asian Games Village, all the 10 exhibited Xialis were sold in just one day.

A senior official from Xiali says the tactic was to save money on advertising, and pass on the saving to the company's customers. But one industry analyst says Xiali's deeper reason is to gain a bigger slice of the market cake. From the beginning of this year, prices for Jetta, Citroen ZX Volcane and Santana have fallen from around 150,000 to 110,000 yuan. Just one week ago Citroen ZX Volcane made a sales promotion offering a new model originally priced at 160,000 yuan, is for 130,000 yuan. Several other manufacturers followed suit with their own price cuts after the announcement. Zhejiang-based Jili Group, the sole private car manufacturer in China, cut prices by 4,000 yuan (\$482) across the board, while Chongqing Alto cut 5000-7000 yuan.

After experiencing consistent growth during the first four months this year, the automobile market

has taken an unexpected dive, following the government's recent announcement that it had relaxed controls on domestic car prices.

According to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers, auto sales in May stood at just 199,900 units, a 17 per cent drop from April. Output fell to 199,800 units in May, down 15.4 per cent from the previous month.

The gloomy scenario came after an announcement by the State Development Planning Commission on May 20 that it had relaxed controls and was allowing domestic manufacturers full latitude in determining prices. The government's intention in deregulating had been to stimulate demand in the auto sector, but the decision has had the opposite effect.

"The announcement reinforced consumers' expectations of further price cuts and made them postpone purchases, but the government has in fact already approved dozens of price cuts by carmakers over the past two years," says Jia Xinguang, a senior analyst with the China Automotive Industry Development Research Institute.

Well-known economist Chen Huai predicted the price cut on autos last year. He thinks this phenomenon is natural. Each mature product has a course of devaluation, such as cell-phones and TVs. He says the price war will go on.



At an auto fair near the Asian Games Village last week, all the 10 exhibited Xialis were sold in just one day.

Photo by Zhuang Jian

China to Attract More Foreign Investment

A share & B share markets to be open to FIEs, SOEs to be available to foreign investors,...



Stockmarket has become an important channel for Chinese enterprises to absorb capital for further development.

Photo by Zhuang Jian

By Zhao Hongyi

Foreign invested enterprises (FIEs) will have a larger role to play in China as the country is encouraging more foreign investment into its hinterland, according to Mr. Deng Zhan, deputy director of the Foreign Investment Department of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC).

According to Mr. Deng, China will promulgate several steps to encourage foreign investors to the western part of the country, including allowing qualified FIEs to apply for listing in the country's A-share and B-share markets; RMB credits to be delivered to FIEs by the designated Chinese banks with business in foreign currencies and foreign banks operated in China; multinationals to purchase large

and medium sized state owned enterprises (SOEs) and to hold shares of more than 49%, except in those few which are critical to the whole nation's economy.

Mr. Deng made these remarks at a seminar in Guangzhou last week.

Accordingly, MOFTEC will revise its "Guidance for Foreign Investment" to meet the requirements of economic restructuring and to further attract foreign investment as stipulated in the tenth national Five Year Plan for Economic Development designed and promulgated by the central government last year.

Highlights in the revised Guidance include: to reduce the number of restricted projects which require a majority share holding by Chinese investors and those in which foreign investment is wholly prohibited; to decentralize the approval rights to the provincial governments for those

projects which do not need a macro-consideration by the central government; to further perfect and simplify the procedures for foreign currencies management; to cancel the forced value appraisal on the imported equipment of FIEs; to regulate the custom procedures and raise their efficiency; to cancel all unreasonable charges on FIEs; to cancel the charges on the land uses in which the land has already been used as investment by the Chinese partner in JVs; to clear all policies and regulations on FIEs and set up a clear legal and regulatory system on FIEs.

China will encourage foreign investors to set up their R&D centers in the country, and attract venture capital and investment funds, according to Mr. Deng.

Mr. Deng expressed that the new Guidance will be released before China's entry into the World Trade Organization.

Six Fields to Further Open Chinato Foreign Capital

1. Relax the restrictions on foreign capital in service and trade sectors like franchising, foreign trade, transportation, education, medical treatment, finance, insurance, telecommunications and intermediary services.

2. Continue to revise, amend and delete existing laws and regulations relating to foreign investment; strengthen the protection on intellectual property rights (IPRs).

3. Promote the cooperation between SOEs and multinationals, encourage foreign investment to participate in the reforms and restructuring of SOEs.

4. Encourage foreign investment in infrastructure, mineral resources exploration, tourism industry development, eco-environmental protection, agricultural and husbandry products processing, renovation on currently existing production projects and new electronic components development and manufacturing in the western part of the country.

5. Guide and encourage foreign investors, multinationals in particular, to invest in new hi-tech industries and set up their R&D center in the country, encourage them to invest in capital intensive and technology intensive projects, as well as other projects with advanced technologies.

6. Encourage small and medium sized Chinese enterprises to participate in international cooperation, promote foreign investment in industrial related and export oriented projects like electric and electronic products, spares and components, raw materials etc.

Beijing to Hold High-Tech Investment Conference

The high-technology investment conference 2001 will be in Beijing on August 2-3.

Sources from the Beijing Municipal Office of Taiwan Affairs, the organizer, said a group of international investors will gather together at the conference with Chinese science, technology and finance experts to seek chances to cooperate.

Officials of relevant government departments and professionals will also be invited to introduce China's investment environment for the high-tech industry and potential commercial opportunities in the sector.

The CEOs of a number of international venture investment companies, science and technology firms, Chinese and foreign experts of securities, fund-raising committees and law firms will also deliver speeches at the conference.

The event will be sponsored by six organizations, including the Beijing Municipal Office of Taiwan Affairs, the Beijing Municipal Science and Technology Commission, the Zhongguancun Management Committee, the NBI Chinese American Computer Association and the EPC Group.

(Xinhua)

Northwest Airlines launched WorldWeb online purchase

By Zhao Hongyi

American Northwest Airlines recently introduced a new online booking service to its recently launched Chinese Web site (www.nwa.com/cn).

The service launched on June 15, named WorldWeb Reservations, sets a new standard in booking travel on-line and offers one of the fastest, easiest and most efficient booking services available today. It enables customers to reserve flights and purchase Northwest Airlines tickets online 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.

The new service also allows customers to make a reservation and hold it for 24 hours, without giving credit card details, one of the only airline on-line booking services that provides this convenient option. In addition, customers can check fares quickly using the fast trip finder on the www.nwa.com/cn home page and select any seat by viewing aircraft seat maps.

Unveiled in May, the Northwest Airlines' Chinese web site is completely bilingual, enabling consumers to switch between Mandarin and English at any time during the purchase process. Customers who buy online for the first time will earn 4,000 WorldPerks Bonus Miles and an additional 1,000 Bonus Miles for E-Tickets usage. Each subsequent booking made online and completed before December 31, 2001 will earn customers an additional 1,000 Bonus Miles.

Railway Construction Brings Tourism to the West

In the next five years, more and more fascinating tourist destinations will become available in western China due to more convenient transportation conditions.

Officials from Tibet consider tourism as one of the five pillar industries for the region in this century.

"Tibet, with its unique culture and scenery, is everyone's dreamland. The railway construction and the policy to develop the western areas will greatly promote the tourism industry," Legqog, chairman of the region said Thursday at a tourism development seminar.

The first 10 construction companies that are responsible for the Qinghai-Tibet Railway have been positioned along the road. The remarkable job of the world's highest railway is to begin in nine days.

Legqog said, "Local people expect the most economic benefit coming from tourism industry."

Tourism is gaining more and more popularity in China where the GDP per capita reached 800 US dollars last year.

During the week-long May Day vacation, over 60 million Chinese people traveled around, with several hundred thousand going to Tibet. For those who were unable to go, the main barrier was not scarce oxygen because of high altitude, but transportation problems.

People from Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia will also benefit from transportation construction. The China Development Bank will open five branches in these areas to back eight main railways in the west.

In the past decade, China has been devoted to developing the western underdeveloped areas. In the next five years, China will invest some 100 billion yuan to build railways there.

The main projects include railway networks linking the east and west and in the western region.

In five years, the speed of trains will be greatly improved, and trains will be able to cross the border into Southeast Asian countries.

(Xinhua)

Impractical arrangement leads to impractical prices New Travel Routes Lack Interest in the Capital

By Zhao Hongyi

Though four Southeast Asian countries opened their tourism markets to Chinese consumers, these markets have not yet received interest and enthusiasm from Beijing tourists, because of their higher than expected prices, according to a report by the Beijing Youth Daily this week.

Since last June 10, a number of Chinese travel agencies opened new travel routes covering the four countries of Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and Brunei. But since then, only one travel agency arranged a group to the four countries, for business study only.

"The real cause for the unsuccessful market development is the price," said Mr. Wang Suqi, deputy director general of the individual section of the famous China Travel Agency (CTA).

"The price for a 8 day tour in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam is 9,000 yuan,

which equals the price of a 15 days tour in Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Macao. A tour to Myanmar alone costs 5,000 yuan. These prices can hardly attract the price sensitive consumers."

Along the impractical price is the impractical route arrangement.

Most of the routes offered by travel agencies in Beijing exclude Myanmar, which requires a flight transfer from Hong Kong or Malaysia and thereby increasing the cost.

In addition, reception costs in Vietnam and Myanmar are also comparatively expensive (daily expense to tens of dollars/person).

"Fortunately, Air China will open a flight to Vietnam in July and Vietnamese Airlines will also have opened its flights to Beijing by then. We are expecting that this could help us to better arrange our

route and curb the comparatively high price," said Mr. Wang.

"It is possible that the four countries will be hot spots to our Beijing consumers in the coming fall," smiled Mr. Wang.



Price sensitive tourists in Beijing becoming more sophisticated.

Photo by Zhuang Jian

State Giving New Concept of "Economy" Cars



It's the time for Chinese to drop their bicycles and pick up cars back home.

Photo by Zhuang Jian

By Zhao Hongyi

"Economy" cars under 80,000 yuan will be the priority of Chinese automobile industry's production and development in the next five years, according to an official from the State Economic and Trade Commission.

As quoted by a report from China's Xinhua News Agency, the official confirmed the trend that private demand for "economy" cars in the country will increase con-

tinuously in the next five to ten years.

"Based on the tenth Five Year Plan designed for the development of the country's automobile industry, by 2005, the nation's total car production volume is estimated at 1.1-1.2 million units, while demand is put at 1.1 million units," said the official. This means that the country's car production will meet the domestic demand by then.

Currently, the so-called "economy" car in China refers to those under a price of 100,000 yuan.

"Due to the competition and challenges to be brought by China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), a price below 80,000 yuan is more reasonable," said the official.

"Meanwhile, such an 'economy' car should also meet critical technical standards, like an engine emission under 1.3 liter, fuel consumption low enough to meet the domestically advanced standards, and other national standards and consumer's requirements relating to safety, energy saving and engine emissions."

According to the Five Year Plan, the central government will promulgate a nationally unified policy for the buying and using of cars, in an effort to develop the market and encourage individuals and families to buy cars.

5-Month Surge in Automobile Sales

Vehicle sales in China were high for the first five months of this year. Buyers drove home almost one million vehicles between January and May, a 22% jump over the same period last year. Meanwhile, car sales also took off, showing a 32% increase to reach 280 thousand.

China has been revving up the engines of its vehicle industry, as well as car industry since the nation's reform and opening up two decades ago. Automobile production has been accelerating at break-neck speed during the period.

Last year, over 2 million vehicle rolled off the assembly line, of which around one-fourth were cars.

Industry insiders say, more than 90% of

the vehicles were manufactured in about a dozen large factories across China. In a bid to meet the booming market demand, automobile makers are sparing no effort to offer buyers vehicles equipped with the newest technology as well as new models developed by other countries. Despite increasing competition among both domestic and overseas companies, most automobile producers are optimistic about China's huge potential market.

Last year, over half the cars sold were purchased by individuals instead of government departments. The government used to be the main market force but that seems to be changing.

(Xinhua)

Celebration of 80th Birthday of CPC



All sorts of activities and exhibitions are being held in Beijing to celebrate the 80th birthday of the Communist Party of China (CPC). These visitors have come to see the Martyr Wall in the exhibition hall at the China Millennium Monument.

Photo by Guo Tieliu



Standing up again: Cao Gengyi.
Photo by Li Wukui

Artificial Heart Can Really Beat

By Sun Ming

The first patient in China to be fitted with an artificial heart was discharged from Beijing's Fu Wai Hospital on June 22. This is the first time such an operation has been performed in China. The artificial heart was placed under the real heart and it replaces the real one with the energy provided by an external power source. The entire procedure is estimated to have cost in the vicinity of 1,000,000 yuan.

Cao Gengyi, the 33-year-old patient suffered serious heart failure. Before the operation, all he could do day and night was lie in bed. But now, he seems almost as fit and healthy as an ordinary person.

There are at present only three people in Asia who have been fitted with artificial hearts, but according to a biologist in Finland, cloned hearts will appear in ten to fifteen years.

New Bell Tolls in Temple of Earth

By Li Shouen

On June 21, a Grand-new bell tolled in the famous Bell-Tower in the Temple of Earth after a silence of some 90 years.

The original copper bell was cast during the Jiajing Period of the Qing Dynasty in 1530. It weighs 2.4 tons and is 2.58 meters high and 1.56 meters in diameter at its widest point. The bell was especially known for the way each toll could reverberate for up to two minutes and could be heard from a great distance.

In ancient times, the bell was only rung when the Emperors of Qing dynasty performed ceremonies to worship the God of Earth at the Temple of Earth. However the earth worshiping ceremony was prohibited in 1911 when the last Qing Emperor abdicated his throne. During the 1960s the Bell Tower was pulled down and the bell was transferred to the Great Bell Temple.

Information Security Exhibition Coming to Beijing

By Su Wei

Infosecurity China 2001, or the China International Information Security Exhibition 2001 is to be held in Beijing from September 4 to 6. While society has benefited greatly from the revolution in information technology, safety loopholes remain a big concern in computer information systems networks. Viruses and attacks by hackers have ravaged computer systems all over the world. The aim of the exhibition is to promote the market for computer safety products, enhance communication between technologies, and create more platforms for Chinese and foreign enterprises to show their technology potential in tapping the Chinese markets for specialized computer security products.

A 12-day Athletic and English camp during the summer vacation. Sports and fitness will be the theme for the whole period. Time to register: From June 1 to July 20

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Consumers Sue Ericsson over Mobile Phone Problems

By Su Nan



Zhao Jianchu shows his problematic Ericsson T18sc.

Ericsson is being sued by thirty-six consumers over the poor quality of three of their mobile phones, models T18sc, T28sc and A2618sc. The instigator of this collective lawsuit, Yang Jianchu says that within only 6 months, the mobile phone he bought required repairs on 7 occasions, the main-board was replaced 4 times and he went to the Ericsson Customer Service Center 18 times.

Another plaintiff, Lai Hongping had to have the main-board of his Ericsson T28sc replaced 5 times, and went to the Maintenance Center 20 times.

In the course of normal use, the mobile phones exhibited a variety of problems, including automatically switching off, malfunctioning keyboards, malfunctioning monitor screen, batteries failing to charge etc. Furthermore these problems could not be efficiently solved even after many trips to the Maintenance Center.

The 36 plaintiffs maintain that Ericsson Mobile phones have quality deficiencies and request the company offer an explanation, a public apology and compensation.

The director of Marketing and Communications of Ericsson (China) Company Ltd., Roland Cheng says the problems encountered by Yang and the others plaintiffs are special cases. He said there are three possibilities. Maybe some of the people had repairs done in places other than the Ericsson Maintenance Center. Maybe some of them were not clear about how to use some of the functions of their mobile phones. Maybe some of the problems were related to network coverage.

Roland Cheng says the company has rejected the claim for 45 thousand yuan compensation by Yang Jianchu, because he was not able to provide sufficient information. He adds the other 35 plaintiffs never directly contacted Ericsson, therefore, the company doesn't know who they are or the exact nature of the problems they encountered with their mobile phone.

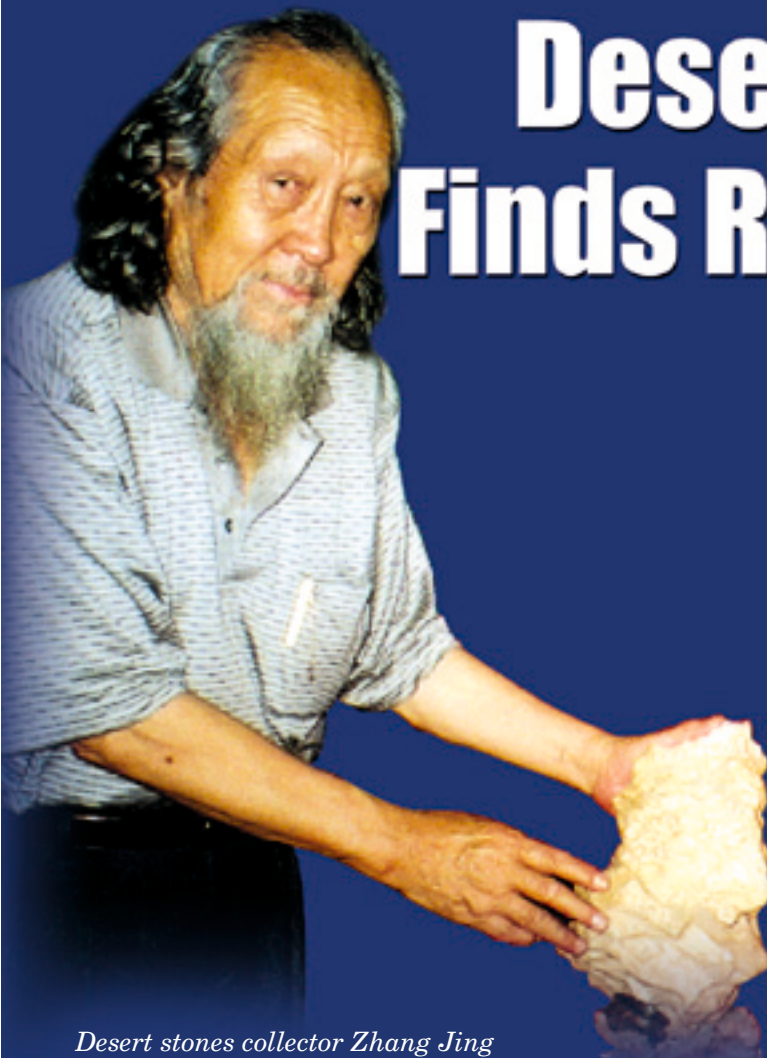
Yang says, "If the court places the case on file for investigation and prosecution, the number of plaintiffs will probably increase to more than 500."



The first female security guards went on duty in Beijing on June 25, giving the city a new elegant look. Li Kexin, right, 18 years old, now serves at the Canadian embassy in Beijing.

Photo by Li Yanming

Desert Explorer Finds Rare Stones



Desert stones collector Zhang Jing

Photo by Sun Ming

By Sun Ming

"Agate Chicken" is said to be worth 130 million yuan. "Alien" is worth 30 million yuan and "Agate Duck" about 20 million yuan.

At least 1,066 desert stones are of high value, according to Gemmological Association of China. A 74-year-old private collector has donated his 13,375 stones to the Beijing Folk Custom Museum in Dongyue Temple.

Finders Keepers

As an engineer, Zhang Jing was from 1979 involved in restoration of the grasslands in Inner Mongolia. In the '80s, he conducted investigations of the deserts in Inner Mongolia.

By accident, he was visiting Agate Lake, a dry lake, when he saw his first "magic stone".

Zhang has been back 11 times.

"It's very difficult to come and go out of Agate Lake," said a reporter who once followed Zhang to the lake. The windows of cars are battered by force 12 sandstorms and six tires from two jeeps had to be replaced. Wolves visited.

Agate Chicken

They called him 'Madman Zhang'. Few took him seriously. Zhang brought his stones back from Agate Lake to Huhhot, capital of Inner Mongolia.

Zhang in 1984 had founded a factory processing construction materials in Xiamen. Zhang was in hospital in 1989 when four of his assistants made off with his factory's raw materials.

Drip bottle in hand, Zhang hurried

back to the factory. In tears, he saw they had taken almost everything. But they left behind his collection of worthless desert stones. Zhang crouched down and picked up a few of his beloved finds. One suddenly felt different from the others, like an egg.

Intuitively he sensed this might be an outstanding find. He sent the 'egg' to Xiamen University immediately. Through the laser illuminator, an odd thing was found inside the 'egg'.

Opening a part of the shell of the egg, inside he found a "chicken": small red mouth, dark eyes. The find was a real nest egg. Gemmological Association of China says Agate Chicken is worth 130 million yuan.

Rich in Friends

"It never occurred to me to try and make a fortune by selling my desert stones," says Zhang. "For the last more than 20 years, what I wanted to do most was to find them a home in Beijing."

Now his dream is true.

Finding, transporting and taking care of the stones costs money. Zhang once owed more than 5 million yuan. Rich men asked Zhang to sell, but he refused.

Besides his factory income, Zhang's friends lent him money. The People's Liberation Army Daily donated a nearly-400-square-meter space to store his stones.

Secretary of the Municipal Party Committee Jia Qinglin heard the legend of the old man of the desert who refused to sell his stone treasures. Chaoyang District accepted the stones and paid "several million yuan", said Zhang. He refused to say the exact amount.



Photo provided by Zhang Jing

Would You Give a Lift to a Stranger?

By Wei Feng

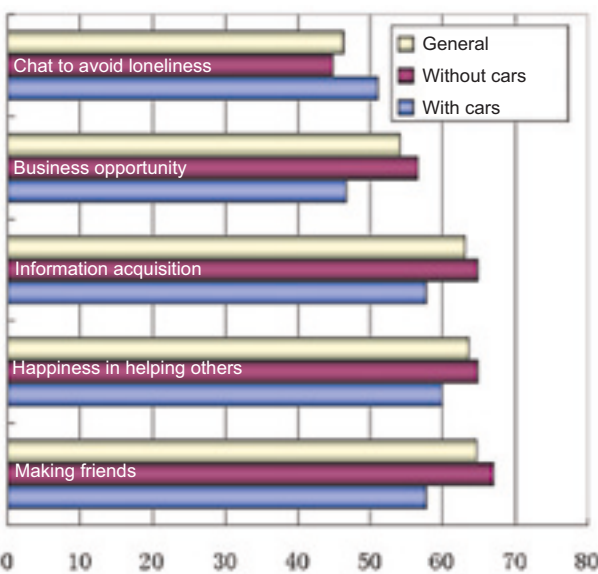
As an increasing number of families are becoming car-owners, more and more people are driving to and from work every day. Some may pull over at a bus stop along their way to offer a lift to anyone who happens to be going in the same direction. This will obviously benefit the person who receives the lift, make full use of the car space and reduce the number of bus passengers. But a few days ago, a Mr. Wang was derided as a "lunatic" when he tried to do just this.

So are drivers really crazy to offer lifts to strangers at a bus stop? Should there be some sort of administrative control over such things? *Beijing Youth Daily* and *Beijing Today* engaged Datasea Marketing Research Group to conduct a survey among Beijingers to see what they thought about the issue.

Half of those surveyed have heard of such occurrences and nearly two-thirds support the practice.

Owning your own car is seen as a sign of being well off, but offering or receiving a lift to or from a stranger is a new concept for many. 51% of those surveyed said they had never heard of such a thing.

Advantages to drivers who give a lift



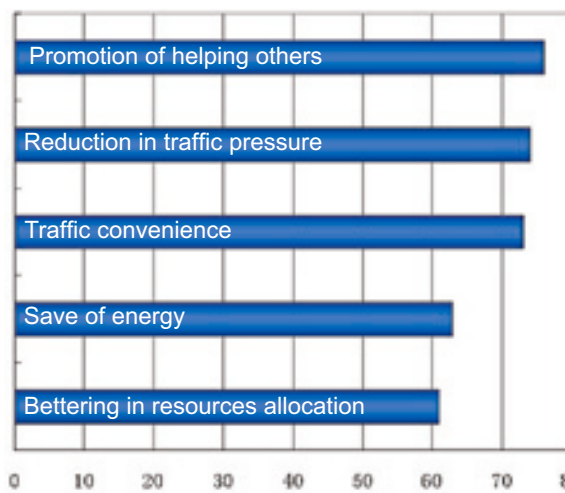
What are the advantages to the driver of offering a lift to strangers?

Most thought it would give the driver the opportunity to make new friends or acquaintances, pick up useful pieces of knowledge, share other's difficulties and derive satisfaction by the act of helping others. Some also mentioned it might open business opportunities and provide company for the journey. Two-thirds thought it could reduce the cost of transportation.

Safety is No. 1 concern for both drivers and 'hitch-hikers'

"What are the disadvantages of offering a lift to strangers?" The majority (78%) of those surveyed agreed that offering a lift to a stranger could put the driver in a potentially dangerous situation. Other negatives included inconvenience and wasting time, possible family 'misunderstandings' or rumors being spread (presumably referring to when a lift is offered, or accepted by a member of the opposite sex), and the interior of the car being dirtied or damaged by wear and tear.

Advantages of giving a lift to a stranger



Saving time is main reason for driver's reluctance to offer a lift to strangers.

If you owned a car, would you offer a stranger a lift on your way to or from work? 34% said yes, 66% said no. Only 9% said they would offer a lift if the hitchhiker was an attractive member of the opposite sex.

The most commonly cited reason for driver's unwillingness to offer a lift to strangers was saving time and avoiding trouble. Other reasons mentioned were fear of rejection, unwillingness to cause

their spouse anxiety and a wish to avoid being the subject of gossip.

75% wouldn't accept a lift if one was offered

To the question "why would you not to accept a lift if it was offered free of charge?" As many as 99% expressed concern in some respect about the driver. However many women also said they didn't wish to cause their spouse anxiety, and wished to avoid being the subject of gossip.

To the question "if you were to accept a lift, what factors would affect your decision?" 76% said their judgment of the driver and the driver's attitude. Over half also mentioned that the driver's temperament should also be considered, while other factors, such as the driver's age, sex and the car itself, were not important.

To the question "if the car you had accepted a lift in was involved in an accident, who should bear the expenses (medical etc.)?" 44% said the driver; 30% said the two should share the costs; 13% said each should pay their own expenses; and 4% said the passenger should foot the bill. Interestingly, the car-owners themselves were more inclined to shoulder the responsibility, with 49% saying the driver should bear all the costs.

No permission to "car-pool" club

Recently, a "car-pool" was founded in Beijing, that provides information about giving and receiving lifts. Drivers and passengers can become members of the club by paying a 200-yuan fee. The club matches drivers with passengers for trips to and from work, with the passenger paying a small sum of money to the driver. Now there are altogether 5 'couples' involved. However, the Beijing administrative authorities have yet to give the club the green light. When asked to comment on this matter, 45% agreed that the government should regulate such activities, 38% said it should not, and 16% didn't know.

Picture by Lao Du Studio
Tables by Tian Ye

Weekly Survey

By Wei Feng

Half Japanese Enterprises Against Limitation on Imports

About half of all Japanese enterprises oppose the urgent limitation on imports imposed by the Japanese government, according to Japan Fuji Comprehension Research Institute.

Of the 1,200 enterprises questioned, 7% expressed "strong opposition" to the limitations, while 43% said they were "not in favor of the ban". 65% of enterprises involved in the retail trade opposed the move.

Regarding the influence of the increasing imports, the enterprises with "positive" and "negative" attitudes were added together to 17%, while 46% said "don't know". 62% agreed that "the company's product prices were reduced for the increasing import goods", but the agreement with "the company's sales were affected" was only 45%. Few enterprises agreed that the import goods would hold more of the market.

Family Violence Grows and Concubinage Increases in Guangzhou

A survey in Guangzhou found that the rate of family violence is growing. In 1999, there were 444 reported cases, while in 2000, the figure grew to 506.

Extramarital affairs and concubine-related matters brought deep distress to wives. Many divorced wives couldn't share a reasonable division of properties, particularly those who divorced from the owners of individual and private businesses.

40% Pupils Spent More On TV than Reading

A survey reveals that nearly 40% of school kids spent more time watching TV after class than reading books. 18% said they "spent much less time reading books than watching TV," while 21% said "they spent less time reading books than watching TV". 31% the time spent watching TV and reading was "almost the same", and 12% said "the time spent watching TV is far less than reading books", while 18% said "the time spent watching TV is less than reading books".

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By Zhang Shixin

As of June 1, a ban on disposable chopsticks takes effect in Shanxi province. And Jiangxi province will soon follow suit.

Although it seeks to protect the environment, the ban is not beloved by the public.

In Nanjing, capital of Jiangsu province, some citizens believe disposable chopsticks are not only more convenient but also more hygienic. They see the ban as a choice for environmental protection over sanitation.

Is there such a trade-off between environmental protection and sanitation? Should disposable chopsticks be banned?

Professor Qiu Yanling, College of Humane Studies, Tsinghua

University

Everything has two sides -- good and bad. This ban is no exception. I think the purpose of the local government's ban is not simply to abate use of disposable chopsticks, but also to promote concepts of sustainable development in China and increase public awareness of environmental protection.

Living standards have significantly improved in China. People are well off enough to afford one-off products. A green consumption mode is proposed and more efforts are being made to promote a sense of environmental protection.

People are coming to know about green fruits, vegetables and even a Green Olympics. At first, they accepted "greenness" out of their own self-interest. But now, they need to protect

the environment voluntarily out of ethical considerations, for the benefit of others and future generations.

Park Young Gin, South Korean student, Beijing Normal University

To be frank, the sanitation issue still needs to be addressed to in China. In my nation, great attention is attached to sanitation. Once a hygienic problem is found in a restaurant, the business must close down immediately.

When our GNP or GDP was below \$5,000, we used to use the same disposable chopsticks. The higher a country's economic development level is, the less its use of such disposable products. In South Korea, chopsticks we use now are made of metal, the same as we use in the house. Even a toothpick is made of special material, like starch,

which can be recycled easily.

Shang Zhenming, manager, Japanese restaurant

I was in Japan more than four years. The same kind of wooden chopsticks are used there, except that the chopsticks are all imported from abroad. Japanese have a strong sense of environmental protection as most of their raw materials are imported, such as coal.

People feel good when using disposable chopsticks because they are new and available for first use.

I don't oppose the abolition of disposable chopsticks. But before the ban is executed, substitutes should be developed ahead of time — say, bamboo chopsticks. Also, the new material needs to be cost-effective without any harmful chemicals.

IN MY OPINION

Basic Education in Life Sciences: Call to Action

By Ivy Zhang

Professor Zhou Zengquan, president of the College of Life Sciences of Peking University, claimed that it is commonly acknowledged life sciences will become a major subject of scientific research in the 21st century. However, the quality of basic education in life sciences is declining in China.

Below are highlights of Zhou's speech delivered at the plenary meeting of the 6th Conference of China Science & Technology Association, on June 23.

Basic Education

According to New Earth views, the earth consists of the biosphere, the geosphere, the aerosphere and the hydrosphere. The biosphere has existed for 3 billion years. The future of the earth is increasingly dependent on the behavior of human society. It is human beings who make earth an intelligent planet. However, humans' overuse of resources can also restore the earth to its original status. Thus, it is imperative to attract society's attention to life science education. A weak basic education in this field will have a significant impact on the cognitive level of society, generating a huge gap between scientists and the public.

Current Situation

Since 1996, biology has been removed from the nationwide College Entrance Examinations in China, which has resulted in decreased interest in biology among middle-school students and biology teachers' reduced enthusiasm. Teaching material and approaches are also not very advanced in high schools. Many laboratories are closed down in universities due to budget constraints.

Proposals

Regulatory departments should make guidelines to improve the position of education in life sciences oriented towards the entire student body, enhancing and reforming teaching. All students should study biology and its relationship with social development and be educated in environmental protection. The scope of life science education should be enhanced and expanded, ensuring specialists play an important role in public education.

“Guangzhou A” Shut Down

Biggest Ecstasy Trafficker Meets His Waterloo

By Xu Changyu/Li Shouen

On June 18, the police in Guangdong province cracked the largest case ever in China involving the production and selling of the drug Ecstasy. The police arrested 26 suspects, 17 males and 9 females, and captured 260,000 Ecstasy tablets, 350,000 Quaalude tablets, 2,000 kilograms of the Quaalude powder, and a large sum of cash.

Code Name “Guangzhou A”

Last September, while investigating a separate drug trafficking case, police in Guangdong uncovered another gang that was also trafficking large quantities of drugs. The two gangs would often temporarily transfer drugs between them.

Because at that time, police could not confirm the identities of any members of the second gang, they gave it the code name “Guangzhou A”.

After some investigation, the police gradually pieced together more and more information about the gang, identifying the ringleaders as “Xiong Ge” (Yu Zhuoxiong) and “A Ming” (Guo Mingqing). “A Ting”, “Feilao Xiong” and “A Chong” were underlings of “Xiong Ge”; “Xiao Li” that of Guo Mingqing. They were responsible for receiving drug shipments, managing the gang’s warehouse, selling drugs and collecting money.

Breaking the Case

On May 22, the police learnt that there was to be a delivery of important goods forwarded to a certain warehouse at Tongdewei in Guangzhou from another province. The police speculated that the delivery might be related to drugs and stepped up their surveillance activities.

On May 23, some scouts located the 14 cases of goods. Undercover police, acting as potential buyers, asked the warehouse owner whether the goods had arrived and found out the consignment number. Another group then went to inspect the goods.

After careful examination, the police found that the consigner and consignee of the goods was the same person, a certain “Li Guohui”. This was the very person they were looking for. His real name was Chen Yuhuan, the gang’s number 3.

The police also got the message that the goods would be picked up the next day, so they decided to move in. They dispatched seven groups to various destinations to watch out for the seven separate chief suspects.

First, Catch the Ringleader

At about 2pm on May 24, word came that Li Guohui was to pick up the goods in a microbus, and the policemen waiting there were immediately notified.

After picking up the 14 cases of goods, Li Guohui drove to Dashatou in Guangzhou, where



One of the suspects looking for Ecstasy from a ditch

Photos by Xu Changyu



Suspect Wang Zhicheng and some of his drugs



Ecstasy and quaalude uncovered by police



Ecstasy captured by police

Maybe it was the lure of easy money that led them to their life of crime.

Maybe the deeper their involvement, the faster their money rolled in.

Maybe the more money they held, the more decadent their lifestyle became.

To maintain their decadent lifestyle, maybe they had to become even more deeply involved.

Maybe it was this vicious circle that brought them eventually to prison.

When they arrived, his wife was there, so they arrested her as well, but to their surprise, they found no sign of the drugs.

On their way downstairs the police saw the younger sister of Wang Zhicheng, who was in the act of removing the drugs. She was caught too without any difficulty.

Wang Zhicheng’s elder sister and her husband were also there, but the police didn’t know them, so they escaped on a motorcycle. Later they too were caught in their home.

Also, Chen Xiuping, who sent the message to Wang Zhicheng’s sisters, was seized afterwards. By June 2, all the suspects involved in the case had been arrested.

Eradicating the Source

The arrested gang members disclosed to the police that all the drugs had been produced in northern China. In order to ensure the source was eliminated and to cut off the distribution network, policemen from Guangdong went to north China, and on June 1, with the help of local police, arrested He Zhonghong, the chief producer of the illicit drugs.

In He Zhonghong’s house the police found some samples of Ecstasy and Quaaludes and decided to interrogate him on the spot. With his signed confession that there was a drug factory in his sister-in-law’s home, the police went to the site where they destroyed all of the drug making apparatus and arrested a number of other suspects.

Li Guohui, From Protector of Life, To Slave of Money

This gang began to traffic drugs from 1993. In 1998, Li Guohui was given a pill of Ecstasy. He was very excited, immediately seeing the potential for profits in the drug. Li majored in medicine at university and was a doctor before he became involved in the drug trafficking underworld.

He set about researching the little pill, and before long, had succeeded in producing an imitation of his own. Then he mustered the other members of the gang to invest in the project and they rapidly organized a network, producing and distributing Ecstasy and Quaaludes.

A Luxurious and Dissolute Lifestyle

The huge profits from drug trafficking made the gang rich almost overnight. In Li Guohui’s house alone, the police found more than 2 million yuan in cash. In all, the police recovered cash and stocks worth more than 10 million yuan in the gang members’ homes.

Almost all the major members in this case had luxury houses alongside the Zhujiang River. Most of them had a mistress, some even had more than one, to say nothing of the girls they called to keep them company on a casual basis.

They had top grade cars, and went in and out luxury hotels as if they were their second homes. Until their downfall, they spent money like water.

Yu Zhuoxiong was waiting. Yu Zhuoxiong took Li Guohui’s place in the bus and drove uptown to a residential area by Longtian Road, Haizhu District. Under his direction, the underlings quickly unloaded the microbus and hid the cases in a rented apartment.

On his way back to return the microbus, Yu Zhuoxiong was, much to his surprise, seized by the police and handcuffed.

Then Numbers 2 and 3

As to Number 2, it was just a “little case” as far as the police were concerned. Acting

on the confession obtained from Yu Zhuoxiong, the police hurried to the China Hotel, where Guo Mingqing was drinking tea with his mistress. As the two were leaving, the police arrested them both at the door of the hotel.

While trailing Yu Zhuoxiong, the police lost Li Guohui, the number 3, after he got out of the microbus. But he didn’t remain unapprehended for long, while he was drinking coffee with his mistress at 6 that evening, the police arrested him too.

Nabbing the Number 4

When the police group

detailed to watch the home of Wang Zhicheng, AKA “A Ting”, the gang’s number 4, were preparing to arrest him, they found him walking to another building from his home.

Not knowing what he was going to do, the police just followed him in order not to alert him. While he was going upstairs they rushed to capture him, however he resisted fiercely and shouted out to alert his family upstairs.

Hearing the noise downstairs, his daughter ran to the balcony to see what was

going on. On seeing her father struggling with the police, she called to her mother Chen Xiuping, the mistress of Wang Zhicheng. When she looked back, Wang was being led away by the police.

Realizing they had been found out, she immediately telephoned Wang Zhicheng’s two sisters, telling them to move the drugs hidden in Wang Zhicheng’s home to another location.

With Wang Zhicheng in their hands, the policemen went in search of the drugs at his home.



Photo by Jia Ting

were Chinese, she became afraid because of her poor Chinese then.

"But every one took good care of me, which made me feel warm." Christina recalled emotionally.

It was the first time that Christina took a sleeper train and she got a ticket for the upper berth. Since Christina was alone, she had nothing to do but go to bed. She looked clumsy on her first attempt to get to a bed so high. A young guy from Zhengzhou helped her when Christina was stuck between bunks.

This guy was in lower berth, which was the most convenient and the most expensive one in sleeper train and its ticket was the hardest to buy in January because of New Year holiday. But he exchanged his lower berth with Christina's upper one. "I did not know then that his berth was the most expensive, I only thanked him for his care at that time, if it happened now I would be grateful for his generosity and his kind intention." Christina said genuinely.

Besides this guy, many passengers would like to chat with her to avoid her loneliness and share every thing they had with Christina to show their hospitality. To Christina, she was alone, but the trip was funny and animated. "In China, I got so much care that I had

no time to miss my own family in Russia, I felt here was like my own home since every one was so kind to me." With these words, Christina stared at me seriously with her light blue eyes.

A 'Young' Elder

When in her homeland, most Chinese Christina knew were old professors. "Because all of them are research workers, they are very serious, traditional and stubborn, they never ignore any uncertainty in their researching, seldom attend our modern activities and are hard to be persuaded; but they are as kind as my grandparents." Christina respected them very much, but never thought to make friends with them until she met one old professor in China.

Christina knew an old teacher in the university by chance. This Chinese old teacher had a hobby: tasting tea. He would invite Christina to join him whenever he met her and gradually they struck up a friendship between generations.

"I would like to have a chat and taste tea with him, because I enjoy his humor and I can learn many things about tea and about Chinese people."

In Christina's opinion, almost all elders in her homeland would like to tell others their miseries

and illness. But that old professor would never do so. He is optimistic about the changes in society, satisfied with his son and daughter, grateful for his wife and his life. He does morning exercises to improve his life and keep his health.

"I am sure he must have some physical illness because of his old age, but he never mentions it when we have a chat. Maybe this is Chinese characteristic: share happiness with others but never bother others with miseries." And after a while, she continued, "actually, I found his soul was much younger than his age, he was a 'young' elder." Christina said with laugh.

"One of my friends came to China five years ago and she came here again this year. To her surprise, Beijing had developed so much and had such a good investment environment, she decided to do her business here, so did I."

"It seems there is predestined relationship between China and I,

I love this land, I am attracted by its beauty and its fast changing. China gives me so many opportunities to build my future, and I hope I can make my own business, maybe, working in an embassy, and create my future family in China. Anyway, no matter what I do, my future will be in Beijing, in China. To me, here is my home." Christina said of her future with hope in her eyes.

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Here Is My Home

By Zhao Xia

"I feel I am not a foreigner or a guest, but a host." Christina Pavlova repeated this frequently.

Our hero or heroine on the Face Page has been a Chinese person since our first edition. While Christina wished to be our heroine after she had read our newspaper, we agreed to this 22-year-old Russian girl's demand, who has been studying international trade in Beijing Polytechnic University for her master's degree since last October.

What Is "Large Population"

After only seven months in China, Christina seemed to be quite accustomed to Chinese tradition, she accepted an offer of a cup of tea but not coffee in a cafe where we met, her light blue eyes and long brown eyelash were great contrasts to the green tea, as was her modern appearance to traditional tea pot.

"Many people wondered why I came to China." Christina's face, lightly freckled, became unclear behind the steam of coffee.

The reason was that this young girl was very curious about one concept: large population. Many people around her, always said 'China has a large population, very large'. It aroused Christina's curiosity: what did this 'large' mean? She could not find an answer from books or others. At last she decided to gain understanding through her own experience.

She was a postgraduate student in Stankin University in Moscow. One day, the hot-headed girl entered the principal's office directly and asked, "May I go to China?"

Honestly speaking, Christina had thought the principal would refuse her absurd request. But unexpectedly the principal said that it was possible, maybe someday she could go. "That was the biggest surprise to me, I just went to have a try and never thought it would come true." Christina said with wide open eyes. Then the lucky girl got one chance to fly to China in Oct. 2000.

Now Christina has already changed her plan for a short-term travel into a long-term studying.

"It is my first trip to China,

while it seems strange and unbelievable, I feel that I have come China before, I have such sensation when I arrived in Beijing. It seems like I just come back home again." Christina said, sounding puzzled.

Go To School By Police Wagon

"Chinese are a hospitable people." Christina said, twinkling her eyes and nodding.

It was the first day that Christina arrived at Beijing airport. Because of a delay in her flight, there was nobody from Beijing Polytechnic University to meet her there. The poor girl could only say "Hello" "Thank you" in Chinese at that time; she did not know how to ask for help or even where she should go. Her despair and anxiety attracted one Chinese girl's attention. The girl returned from Russia and was waiting for her parents at airport. After finding out what happened to Christina, this warm-hearted Chinese girl said, 'my parents will come to pick me up and I know where your university is, if you like, we would be glad to take you there.' With no other choice, Christina accepted her assistance and went to school in her father's police wagon, which surprised everyone in the school.

"It is hardly that such kind of things will happen in my own country, but in China there are many friendly people who would like to offer help." Christina seemed excited when she mentioned her first day in Beijing, she drank a mouthful of tea to calm herself down, "actually, I have met many warm-hearted and hospitable people who make me think I am not abroad but at home."

Have An Animated Trip Alone

In January this year, one of Christina's friends in Zhengzhou invited her to travel there and she accepted. It was her first trip to another city in China alone. On the train, Christina felt a little lonely when she found all the other passengers



4



1. This old bicycle is a gift to Christina from an old professor.

2. Christina is dreaming of her future with hope.

3. Chinese students are telling about university's history to Christina.

4. "I like Chinese food."

5. Christina is crazy about this traditional kite.

Photos by Zhuang Jian



3

1

Ancient Art Facing Extinction and Renaissance

Kunqu Opera Listed as UNESCO Masterpiece

By Miao Yajie

"Memory is vital to creativity; that holds true for individuals and for peoples, who find in their heritage - natural and cultural, tangible and intangible - the key to their identity and the source of their inspiration". UNESCO.

A series of activities sponsored by North Kunqu Opera Troupe attracted attention from all circles in Beijing on 22-24th June. Until the proclamation of the UNESCO, the 500 year old art had not caused such large-scale notice in a long time, although it has had a small, but loyal group of followers.

UNESCO Masterpiece

UNESCO proclaimed Kunqu Opera as a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" together with 18 other masterpieces on May 18, 2001. The vote for China's Kunqu Opera, as a 500-year-old theatrical art, was carried unanimously.

It was in November 1999 that the UNESCO decided to create an international distinction entitled "Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity".

None of the 18 member international jury had ever heard Kunqu Opera before. In a three-day decision making process judges listened to a 15-minutes' tape of the performance and studied the detailed documentation, before making the decision that Kunqu Opera fit the criteria for "Masterpiece". The criteria used in the selection process are outstanding value, roots in cultural tradition, affirmation of cultural identity, source of inspiration and intercultural exchange, contemporary cultural and social role, excellence in the application of skills, unique testimony to living cultural tradition, and risk of



Chronicle of Kunqu Opera

The earliest form of Kunqu Opera appeared in early 14th century, as a folk melody popular in the Kunshan area of Jiangsu province in eastern China.

It is said that a man named Gu Jian was good at singing the Kunshan melody in the reign of Emperor Zhizheng of Ming dynasty (1341-1368). At that time, the term "Kunshan Melody" appeared.

A new opera named Kunqu Opera was created based on Kunshan Melody and other local folk melodies by Wei Liangfu, an opera writer, and his friends during the reign of Emperors Jiajing and Longqing of Ming dynasty(1522-1572).

Then opera writer Liang Chenyu(1521-1594) composed an opera in Kunqu. The art was successfully received by public.

Kunqu Opera spread quickly through the province of Jiangsu, to Zhejiang and some other provinces during the reign of Emperor Wanli of Ming dynasty (1573-1620). Later it was brought to Beijing by the southern scholar-officials.

disappearing.

Oldest Theater Threatened

Kunqu Opera, as China's oldest and one of its most influential theatrical traditions, has been performing in many areas of the country. A whole Kunqu Opera usually consists of more than 24 scenes-accompanied by arias-with a complex plot and subplots involving human or supernatural elements. The performance usually features 12 actors who employ gestures, pantomime, mock combat and acrobatics, as well as stylized dancing and singing. A small ensemble of wind and string instruments, and percussion instruments accompany the singing and stage action.

Legacies of the Kunqu theatre are mostly librettos from the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) and Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Kunqu Opera is now confronted with a severe predicament in the tide of globalization. The proclamation of the heritage status of Kunqu along with other 18 masterpieces is not meant to be a collective funeral, as Spanish writer Juan Coytisolo, Chairman of the International Jury mentioned at the opening of the meeting of the Jury on 15 May. "These cultures and languages are a living inheritance and we must avoid the trap of museumising them and turning ourselves into anthropologists who, as a Mexican intellectual said, 'see peoples as cultural fossils'". But Kunqu Opera has been suffering from difficulties.

The imminent threat to Kunqu Opera is the lack of a continuous performances. The fact is since 1990 Kunqu Opera has not been regularly staged in Beijing. Further, Kunqu Opera has encountered an even more



severe threat: the shrinking of the repertoire. It is said that when the North Kunqu Opera Troupe was established in the 50s, the artists mastered around 660 pieces. But the repertoire today has decreased to about 200 pieces, and only half of that number have had the chance to be on stage.

Still Renowned and Beloved

The performance accidentally clashed with the Three Tenors concert at the Forbidden City. Many people say they do not like Kunqu because it is hard to understand the words. Which begs the question, is Italian any easier to understand for the Chinese. The problem is not civilisation, but those criteria used to define civilisation. If one can be taught to love arias and music not of one's culture, then so can one be taught to appreciate one's own culture.

The experience of Gu Zhaoshen from the Institute for Promotion of Chinese Culture, Hong Kong, might be more enlightening. As a Hakka, Gu used to listen to Guangdong opera. After picking up and dropping a couple of local operas like Shaoling opera and Beijing opera, he finally found Kunqu Opera as his life's love. He pointed out that people learn through comparisons of what is good, and what is the best. It is important to show those who are still far from



Kunqu where its beauty lies.

The most vital step in saving Kunqu is to create an environment that will not blindly follow western standards of "good music". With new standards, people may take the time to listen to Kunqu and form their own opinion and their own idea of music.

The fierce debate, over whether to renovate this ancient opera, to write new plays, to sort out and revive the classics will bring Kunqu Opera a new spring is still unresolved. The common understanding has already settled: to sort out and revive the classics, to preserve the essence of the heritage. This is the most crucial task for the time being, taking the age of the living masters and the immaturity of the young generation into consideration. The later we commence the rescue project, the more we lose. It is reported the supporting of seven existing Kunqu opera houses, the training of new performers, the revival of rarely performed operas, and the organization of Kunqu festivals is in the governmental plan.

19 "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity"

Kunqu Opera China
The Garifuna Language, Dance and Music Belize
The Oral Heritage of Gelede Benin
The Oruro Carnival Bolivia
The Gbofe of Afonkaha : the Music of the Transverse Trumpets of the Tagbana Community Côte d'Ivoire
The Cultural Space of the Brotherhood of the Holy Spirit of the Congos of Villa Mella Dominican Republic
The Oral Heritage and Cultural Manifestations of the Zápara People Ecuador and Peru
Georgian Polyphonic Singing Georgia
The Cultural Space of 'Sosso-Bala' in Niagassola Guinea
Kuttiyattam Sanskrit Theatre India
Opera dei Pupi, Sicilian Puppet Theatre Italy
Nôgaku Theatre Japan
Cross Crafting and its Symbolism in Lithuania Lithuania
The Cultural Space of Djamaa el-Fna Square Morocco
Hudhud Chants of the Ifugao Philippines
Royal Ancestral Rite and Ritual Music in Jongmyo Shrine Republic of Korea
The Cultural Space and Oral Culture of the Semeiskie Russian Federation
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Photos by Jia Ting

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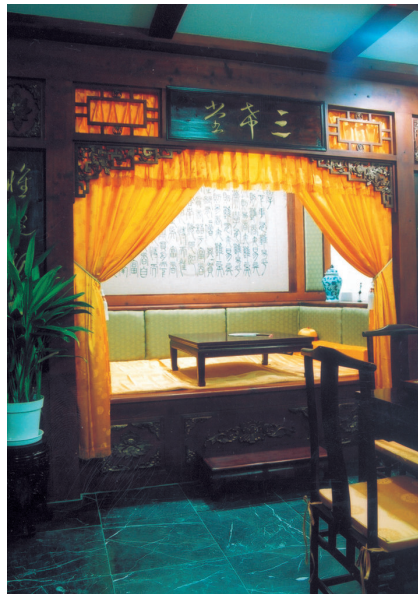
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Panic in Growing Up

In Zhao Ning's novel, I heard clearly the sound of rupture of those sensitive hearts and the cry of sexual illusion in the mediocre years, which, like a powerful whip, is lashing out at the drowsy, dying nerves of literature.

Xie Youshun, a critic

Undoubtedly, Zhao Ning was much disgusted with such an existence. Instead, she ran away bravely and conscientiously and plunged herself into literary creation.

Xu Kun, a writer

In the marathon of literary creation, Zhao Ning is an athlete with a uniform speed. The uniform speed is not a strategy but an inner rhythm of her physique. She is a woman born with the talents for writing novels.

Ye Sha, a poet

The novel *A Young Girl in Two Halves* by Zhao Ning is for adult readers. There is a passion that makes people trembling as well as stubbornness and calmness out of the ruins of the passion, which are like plants growing and people sitting in the sun on an erupted volcano.

For adult readers means that her novel is neither for the youngsters nor for adults who have not yet matured. Only those with a matured mind can appreciate it and enter bit by bit into the plot of complication and thoroughness.

Li Jingge, a critic



Epilogue

A *Girl of Two Halves* is a novel that cut me into two halves like lightning. The writing of each of the chapters made me feel pain and panic-stricken. When I was busy with writing the first chapter entitled *Petals or Lips*, one of the leaders at my previous work unit had a talk with me, informing me that my application for transfer to another profession that I had submitted four years before was approved. Before I became a

free-lance writer, I taught computer at a school. During those years, I spent all my time either at home or in the school's computer room. Life was dull and boring. I only could find time to engage in writing at night. My life differed completely at daytime and night, seemingly I had two different faces.

At the time when I just finished the beginning of this long story, I obtained permission to be a free woman who needed not go anywhere to work but could engage in literary creation from the time I got up in the morning.

The permission was like a mere illusion but it was nice. I love writing too much. I am willing to lose anything so long as I can write something everyday.

A *Girl of Two Halves* is the most tiring novel I have so far written. It is one of my five novels on women. I felt greatly relaxed after I wrote the novel, a literary work heavy in volume and rich in content. It seems that a heavy brick on the pit of my stomach has been removed.

That day, when I got a thick pile of proof sheets of the novel, it seemed that they were not

sheets of paper in my hand but a part of my life. Once again, I shuttle between people and the cold machines and among strangers of every description including men who stroked "my" skin like flowing water and then quickly left and women who are not resigned to seeing their hopes ruined one after another. And once again, "I" am walking in a thriving desert of modern people. "I" am busy, lonely, and with a vagrant spirit drifting about, failing to find an outlet.

Zhao Ning
November 6, 2000

A girl of two halves

Chapter I: Petals or Lips

by Zhao Ning

One night, I had a dream about sex, the first time ever in my life.

There appeared in my dream the shadow of a human figure, which split into two halves. The two halves let me sit on the edge of a bed, took off my upper clothing, and then began to gently stroke my breast with their hands. I could not see their faces. There was a dim light in the room. It seemed that there were cloud-like clusters of taupe light moving around. It was as if I was tapped in a hypnotism that my mouth opened and shut like a dying fish but could not utter any sound. I sat stiff there and my eyes look straight ahead without realizing at all who the two human shadows were. Suddenly,

the two shadows joined together and then separated again like the split and polymerization of cells under a microscope. The dream lasted for quite a while. My sitting posture on the edge of the bed appeared repeatedly, the two shadows joined together again and again, and then there was the movement of men taking off my upper clothing. I wore a pullover with a loose lower hem, which was lifted up from below. I felt that there was a biting cold when the pullover was lifted. There was no temperature in their hands holding tightly my breast, one was on the left and the other, on the right. Then, they put forth their strength, trying to tear me up. I felt grievous pain and tried to get out of the horrible dream. But all of a sudden, my thinking did not work. I sat on the edge of the bed like a wooden-head with a stiff body. My

mouth was talking but I did not know even myself what I said because I was in a semi-conscious, dreamy state. Maybe I was muttering something to myself or I was moaning slightly. As daybreak was approaching, I was torn into two halves by the two men. I felt unbearable pain and saw blood in my dream

.....

He lifted up my upper clothes and unbuttoned my bra at one try. I did not know why his hand was so quick and neat. Judging from his unbuttoning the bra, an experienced woman would know for sure if he had other women before. He was young and, he should not act like that. I was so muddle-headed that I lost thinking at that time. I became a blockhead, feeling hot in every inch of my body and placing myself unreservedly in his power.

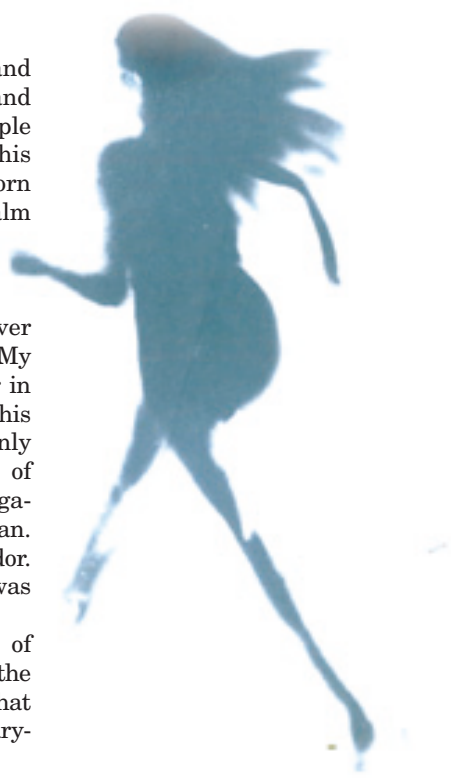
I felt his hand, a man's hand,

was moving slowly around inside my clothes. I had neither experience nor response, just standing at a loss there. Things were progressing slowly like the slow motions in a movie. I thought that the dream I had about sex later must have something to do with my being fondled by a man for the first time. His hand brought about a great shock to me. He lit the fire inside my body. I became incomparably restless, dry and thirsty, and crazy.

I had a clear yet dim memory of my breasts meeting a man's hands for the first time. The recollection of allowing myself to be ordered about like a blockhead made me shiver and become restless. The strokes a woman receives from a man will decide the direction she heads for in life. It was from the experience I had with him that I began to acquire a special sen-

sitive to men's fingers. His hand touched one of my breasts and cupped it in his palm. My nipple stood stiff out, pecking at his palm like an awakening newborn pigeon an open mouth. His palm began to move around my smooth breast like the ink stick rubbing in circles on an ink-slab. I bet that I had never been stroked so stimulatingly. My nipple grew bigger and bigger in his palm. I smelt an odor of his body. It was an odor that only could be smelt in the dorms of male students, a mixture of cigarettes, sweat, and things unclear. I was infatuated with the odor. He held me so tightly that I was almost to be crushed.

We heard faint rumblings of thunder on the other side of the horizon. In a sudden lightning that followed, I saw an extraordinary-shaped white breast.



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By Zhu Lin

The three tenors' historic concert in Beijing concluded with great success. Their brilliant voices were engraved on the walls of the ancient Forbidden City on June 23. Audiences all over the world watched their memorable performance.

But besides greatness, the concert left a strong impression of haste. Luciano Pavarotti and Jose Carreras hurried to Beijing on June 21. After a quick rehearsal with the symphony orchestra of the China Central Opera Theatre, they hurried to

Seoul, meeting Placido Domingo who had arrived there earlier. While their concert on June 22 was still a hot topic for the Korean audience, the tenors had already left for Beijing, arriving at 1:15am the next morning. The curtain of Beijing performance was raised in such a haste.

Two concerts in two days and two countries successively might be too hard for Pavarotti at the age of 66, Domingo 60 and Carreras 54. During the whole performance, except for Domingo's playful eyes sometimes, Pavarotti and Carreras

didn't seem as active as usual. In consideration of the fact that they are a little past their prime, the conductor often shortened the duration of the last note or the highest note of some arias. As soon as the climax of the piece was reached, it slid into the end, obviously speeding up. And of course, no exciting High C ever appeared. Nevertheless, the clever choice in the repertoire still led the concert to an ocean of applause.

Since the heavenly voice first lingered above the city of Rome in 1990, the get-together of

the tenors has turned out to be a social phenomenon rather than a common music event and seized the attention globe-wide. Their voice for 30,000 audience in the embrace of the ancient bricks of the oriental shrine will be remembered as something more than just a musical event.

Photo by Lu Beifeng



Photo by Zhuang Jian

“Shared Experience” Movement Louder Than Language

By Zhu Lin

“One of the most special things about ‘Shared Experience’ is that we involve body movement in the work.” Nancy Meckler, director of “Mill on the Floss” says. During the three performances of “Mill on the Floss” by the British Theatre “Shared Experience” from June 20 to 22 at China Children Theatre, her words were proved true. With the actors' rich body language, the audience forgot about the obstacle of English, lost in the passion of the heroin Maggie's tragic story.

Adapted from George Elliot's masterpiece, “Mill on the Floss”, the play presented Maggie's emotional experiences as she grew-up. Before “Shared Experience” came to China, the media questioned how well the Chinese audience would understand their English lines. But once the audience was caught up in the story, the problem of language became less and less important. Most distinctively, there were three Maggies on the stage, each symbolized one of her growing period. As Maggie's inner conflict grew more and more tense, the three tried desperately to press each other down, but ended up in a tearful embrace. In that way, her sufferings and struggles were visualized, speaking louder than language.

After watching the drama on June 21, Zheng Na, a student from the Central Drama Academy said, “I don't think English is a big problem for me since their body language is so rich. I think anybody with a sensitive heart can feel Maggie's pain. What

she searches for is actually impossible to get, so death is her only ending.” Obviously touched by the performance, Zheng's pretty face grew very serious. Zhao Shufen from the English Dept. of Beijing Normal University had special feeling about the significance of body language. She remembered, that when the first Maggie's passion was laughed at by her family members, she just ran and ran around the stage while other people go on with their chatting. The director didn't let her say anything. “But the effect is stronger than



Photo by Huang Xuyu

speaking,” Zhao assured.

“Shared Experience” not only successfully held the audience's heart in Beijing, but also inspired the people in the drama circle. Ren Ming, the associate director of China People's Theatre said “I feel the British tradition of drama is more profound than ours. Their way to interpret the play inspires me a lot.” Yuan Hong, a drama producer, was very impressed by the actors and actresses' comprehensive quality. “Compared with them, we lack so much things. Their performance is a spur to me, indeed.”



By Yi He

Unlike most of the movie markets in the world, Japan turns out to be facing less threat from Hollywood. According to Sento Takenori, a director, Japanese films have occupied 36% of the local market in recent years. At the Japanese Independent Film Festival held in the Beijing Film Academy from June 18 to 24, Chinese audiences caught a glimpse of the achievements of Japanese films.

Hashiguchi Ryosuke's movie “Like Grains of Sand”, the gold medal

Japanese Movies Independent from Hollywood

winner at the 1996 Rotterdam Film Festival, gained great popularity at this film festival. From a unique perspective, Ryosuke told a gloomy love story about five high-school students. “Eternal love is impossible,” Hashiguchi said, “as long as there is one moment of affection, I'm satisfied. That one moment bears immortality, and it is enough for me to trust in that one moment.”

Japanese independent films have been produced by various mini-cinemas since the 1980s. “Independent” refers to the strong individuality in the movie. Japanese

independent movies have already had great success in the local market, as Sento Takenori mentioned on the 24th at the closing ceremony.

He emphasized that the Japanese directors could succeed because their films are deeply rooted in Japanese culture. During all these years, he has stuck to Japanese styles and concepts, and has worked on subject matter interesting to his people. His experience may give a hint to the Chinese movie industry, which is facing the same Hollywood threat now.

Shining Dancers Illuminate Beijing's Stage

By Yi He

A dance gala named “Flourished Time, Brilliant Works” was staged in China Theatre from June 23rd to 25th to celebrate the China Communist Party's 80th birthday. Three generations of around 300 renowned Chinese dancers

from all over the country presented the cream of Chinese folk and modern dance. “It's rare to see so many first-class dancers from so many provinces perform on one stage,” said Shen Minhua, associate professor in the China Dancers Association.

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Photo by Fan Xuedong

Orange Club Techno Paradise

by Jiao Pei

Hidden away in an alley across the road from north gate of Gongren Tiyuchang (Workers Stadium), Orange opened in May 2000 with the promise to introduce the latest in techno and dance music from Britain, France and Japan and elsewhere. On weeknights, you can groove away until 2:30. Fridays & Saturdays often feature guest DJs from overseas, and you can dance till dawn, if your legs are up to it! Last Saturday, Tak-kyu Ishiino from Japan & techno godfather Jamilkham from Hong Kong put on a party, attended by around one thousand people.

The dimly lit interior features lots of orange, so there's no danger of forgetting where you are. The whole club can hold 500 (more on party nights) and there are three sections, one for those who want to feel the rhythm of the music; one for those who want to watch, and a quieter, more intimate area for those with romance on their minds. The 2nd floor is decorated with signed posters of those famous DJs who have played at Orange.

Add: 2, #10 Alley Xingfuyicun (幸福一村) Chaoyang District
Tel: 64157413

Open: 8pm-2:30am on weekdays, till 6pm on weekends



Photo by Fan Xuedong

Green Club Bring You Fresh

by Jiao Pei

As the name suggests, Green provides a fresh and cool escape from the hot Beijing summer. Live jazz is featured nightly in the outer room by the band named 'Bu Yi Ding'. Xiao Hu plays the bass, Long Long guitar, and trumpet Wen Zhiyong. They enjoy a relatively high reputation in the field of jazz. There is a dance floor in the larger inner room, if jazz isn't your cup of tea, you can dance to rock 'n' roll and techno. Every weekend, some big name acts provide live entertainment.

Located in the Landmark Tower, Green was founded a year ago. The decor is stylish, and the color scheme revolves, not surprisingly, around shades of green, dark green, light green, yellowish green, & the occasional hint of aqua. The front and top of the bar is made of green, translucent glass, and it is lit from inside. The tables are of a similar style, with green leaves beneath the glass.

Green offers a business lunch deal priced around 50 yuan per person. In the evening you can stay till close with one 30 yuan beverage. The food is of common western & south east Asian style, such as pizza, noodles and so on, and the clientele seem to be mostly foreigners, music-lovers and fashionable youth.

Add: 1/F Landmark Tower (亮马大厦) 8 Dongsanhuan Beilu Chaoyang District
Tel: 65906999

Open: weekdays, 9pm-3am; weekends, 9pm-4am

Dining in Old Beijing Style

Tourist tries role-reversal



by Jian Rong, Jiao Pei

"Wow, I found a new restaurant, just like those big tea houses of old Beijing." Last weekend, when I was trying to decide where to have dinner, a friend suggested I try this restaurant. OK!!! I'll go there to have a look. This friend was born soon after Beijing's liberation. He grew up in the Hutongs and played on the old city wall. His knowledge of Beijing's old culture

makes me trust his recommendation.

The restaurant is called Tan Gen Yuan, and is situated by the east gate of Ditan (Temple of the Earth). You can follow Ditan's enclosing wall of green bricks and get a sense of Beijing's old city wall. If you want to arrive at the restaurant in true 'Old



Two-man comic shows feature absurd stories and exaggerated performances

Photo by Louge

Beijing' style, you can sit in a rickshaw for the short trip from the East Gate. In front of the restaurant, an old man of 70 or so welcomes you with a traditional shouted announcement of your arrival.

Square tables & stools are laid inside the restaurant, and pictures and photos of old Beijing adorn the walls. "What were those big tea houses like?" Born in the 1970's, I have never seen such things. "Places where people could sit around tables, drinking tea, eating snacks, and chatting, in those days, many people came to meet their friends in such places."

Dining here, you can watch 'Old Beijing' performances, such as cross talk, Qin Shu, acrobatics, two-man comic shows and magic. The simple decorations are interesting, worth noting, such as Eight Immortals table; an old fashioned square table for eight people, Ming dynasty style chairs, and various small ornaments belonging to that time. You can also see a 'Kang', once common in northern China, a brick bed under which a fire was lit in the winter, a kind of old fashioned electric blanket.

"The dishes are traditional Chinese ones, but they are not very typical." My friend commented after dining there.

Add: east gate of Ditan Park (地坛公园东门)

Tel: 64283358 64273356

Open: 11:30am-2pm, 5:30pm-10pm

English menu available

BIAN HEALING

A Lost Chinese Medicine

by Wang Dandan

What is bian healing?

According to Huangdi Neijing, the oldest known book on traditional Chinese medical science, Bian healing, acupuncture, moxibustion and Chinese herbal medical treatment constitute the four basic medical skills of traditional Chinese medical science. Acupuncture, moxibustion and herbal remedies will be familiar to most people, but what is Bian healing? The famous scholar Xu Shen, (58 - 147 AD) wrote in his Shuowen-

Bin Qing stone, out of which the bells were made, was found on the banks of the Si River in Shandong Province. Si Bin Qing stone was highly treasured in ancient China. There is record in Shang Shu, a Confucian classic, describing how the Qing stone found along the banks of the Si Bin river was chosen to be presented as an article of tribute to the emperor.

According to Shang Shu, when the stone was struck or hammered, all animals came out dancing together. With the emergence of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism, Si Bin Qing was once used in temples to make percussion instruments and as one of the important ritual instruments for Confucians to help cultivate their moral character and nourish their inborn nature.

The 2nd emperor of the Tang Dynasty, Li Shimin (599 - 649 AD) once divined the political situation of the Tang Dynasty simply by striking a Qing stone. The ancient Chinese people attached great importance to the excavation of a Si Bin Qing stone, as such an occasion would be regarded as a good omen, portending good health and prosperity.

If you are interested in learning more about bian stones, or would like to purchase your own bian stone to test its medicinal properties, you can visit the Si Bin Bian Shi Research Center.

Add: No. 3 Hongliannancun (红联南村, 小西天向西1公里附近), Haidian district

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Photo by Fan Xuedong

jiezi, Bian healing means using stone to 'ci' or prick or stab diseases.

Research shows that the ancient Chinese used various healing instruments made from a special stone called Qing, such as Bian awl, spade-shaped Bian tool, Bian slate, Bian ball, Bian anvil, for sensing, pressing, rolling, rubbing, pricking, striking, knocking, scraping, etc. Consequently, Bian-healing skill should be interpreted as "the way that the ancient Chinese used to adopt for the purposes of medical treatment and health protection, using lithoidal artifacts."

Si Bin Qing, Sacred Stone

In the 1970s, a set of bells made of Si Bin Qing stone, a special kind of stone used for bian healing, was unearthed in Shandong Province. A few years later, an outcrop of rare Si



Photo by Fan Xuedong

ONE-STOP PLAZA

Offers

All Your Silk Needs

by Wen Long

Beijing has long been famous for its enormous range of silk products, but the fact that they are scattered all over town, in department stores, specialty shops and street side stalls often makes it difficult for shoppers to track down exactly what they want. Tourists especially, usually here for only a few days, have a hard time finding bargains, or just something a little unusual.

The new one-stop emporium, Yuanlong Silk Plaza, where just about everything except the ceiling lamps are made of silk, goes a long way towards solving this problem. They even provide a selection of novelty toys to keep the children entertained while mum or dad concentrates on the serious business of trying on a new pair of silk slippers, or perhaps a dressing gown.

The new five-story Yuanlong Silk Plaza is near the north gate of the Temple of Heaven and has its roots in a modest shop that opened there about a century ago. It offers an enormous range of silk embroidery, drawn work, handmade carpets, tapestries, brocades, underwear and other clothing, both Chinese and western style and even infants' booties. There is also a selection of leather and cashmere goods.

The Plaza also features a silk museum, which traces the history of silk and its manufacture. On display are numerous carefully prepared illustrations of the silk industry's initial development, including of course the famous Silk Road, and the crucial role played by the humble mulberry tree and the silkworms that feed off it.

Add: 55, Tiantan Rd. (天坛路), Chongwen District

Tel: 67022288

Open: 9am-7pm

Attention

Aspiring Cartoonist

by Li Dan

Japanese comics are popular all around the world, especially among young people, and have inspired many to try their hand at the art form. But how to get started? Do you need special materials? The answer is yes, and we are going to recommend a store that specializes in professional comic making materials.

At the appointed time, Wang Yali, the middle-aged director of the Japanese Painting Material Store appeared in front of me with a warm smile. She told me the shop is the general sales agent in China for Japanese art and design materials.

The first thing you need is a piece of manuscript paper. This is a special kind of high-quality paper with measurements marked on the four edges. Secondly you should have a selection of pens of varying thickness, penholders and black and white ink with which you sketch out the rough design of your cartoon. Comic copytone is then stuck onto the manuscript paper, using a carving knife to cut out the comic character. This is peeled off leave the background color. This is the most difficult step. Finally you need to add some colors to your comic.

The store sells a wide variety of comic materials. They have over 1,000 kinds of copytone and 150 colors of pigments. If you are new to comic making, the Comic Beginners Set will get you started. Model wooden hands and human figures are helpful tools for drawing. Other materials available include section paper, free paper, sketchbooks, plastic film, graphic tapes, drawing pens and easels.

The shop, which is popular with art students and comic lovers, also sells painting and drawing equipment, and provides a framing service.

Add: Japanese Painting Material Store, Jia 3, Hujialoulou, Chaoyang District, east of Jingguang Center, in the Shimei market (施美商城), bus 9,112,110,101,402,405 to Hujialou (呼家楼).

Tel: 65859907, 65865382

Open: 9am-7pm



Photo by Chen Shuyi

Office, Apartment in One?

by Wang Dandan

There are three catch phrases in Beijing's real estate market at present; hotel apartment, open house and SOHO. The reporter recently investigated three representational projects and found the following information.

Hotel? Office? Apartment?



Liu Xian, manager of Longtime Software Company in Zhongguancun, bought 80sqm at International Metro Center, a property that best represents hotel apartments in Beijing. He says he bought the property to rent now, but in a few years time, he plans to relocate his company there. He says there are several reasons for doing so.

A hotel apartment offers advanced business facilities with comprehensive business functions to meet different needs. Its business center provide 24 hour service such as conference rooms,

business secretaries, interpreters and translators, banking, post office, ticket booking, printing, copying, and faxing. Furthermore, the apartment offers international five-star standard hotel service, with conveniences such as cleaning, morning wake-up calls, room service, laundry, shopping and so on.

Different nature of the purchased land

International Metro Centre bought the land for building offices, which is 20-30% more expensive than for apartments. The maximum term for a bank loan to purchase an office is 15 years, shorter than those available for buying an apartment. You have to specify in advance how you plan to use the property, i.e. residential or commercial.

Disadvantages

Although these are multi-functional apartments, or offices, offering many services, they cannot be simply defined as either an office or apartment. Also, the services offered are relatively expensive.

Open House

An open house can be defined as a kind of apartment without interior wall. New Start apartment is the first in Beijing to offer the



open house idea. The rule of construction is simple but unusual: the central area is the bathroom, which serves as the interior load-bearing wall, while the outer wall is the exterior load-bearing wall. The space between the bathroom and the outer wall is open.

The free construction composition makes the Open House suitable both for business and living. For living, the standard apartments can be divided into 1-4 rooms. For offices, each department can have its individual space, and if one day, you dislike the allocation, you can easily change them.

Open House properties should be located near a commercial area with easily accessible transportation, and should offer such facilities as parking, banking, post, security, business center, multi-function rooms and exhibition halls.

To buy or to rent

Lu Wen, the owner of a small company in Zhongguancun carefully weighed up the advantages and disadvantages of buying an Open House or just renting an office.

Now in Zhongguancun, the standard price of renting a high quality office is 8-10 yuan per sqm per day, 4-7 yuan per sqm for the medium level, and 2.8-3.5 yuan per sqm for the lowest level. If you rent a medium level office of 150 sqm, the monthly cost is 150x4x30=18,000 yuan per month. If you buy the same office in Open House, at 7,900 yuan per sqm, you only pay 6563 yuan per month after you make 80% loan for 20 years from the bank, and what's more, you are the owner of this house.

More like a business office

Open House is suitable for those who work long hours. It is not suitable for living, as most facilities are designed to meet business needs.

SOHO

The best-known SOHO in Beijing is Jian Wai SOHO, whose principal designer is the well-known Japanese architect Riken Yamamoto. The project includes office buildings, Small-Office/Home-Office housing, villas and residential high-rises.

Despite the associated conveniences, there are certain disadvantages inherent in most SOHOs, such as being isolated from the public, away from the commercial district, and cooking smells invading the office. Actually, SOHO, as a new concept for real estate in China, was first posed by New Town (Xiandaicheng) a forerunner building of the project.

After all the introductions above, we can still not make a clear definition among these business apartments. Whether Open House, SOHO or Three in One, they still need customers and market testing. It is not so much what the developer has to say about it, but how the customer reacts that matters.

Shadow of the Halo

by Wenlong

Much has been made in both the media and in real estate circles of the CBD (the area around Jianguomen), Zhongguancun, Yanyuncun (Asian Games Village), Yansha (Lufthansa Center), and Wangjing as desirable areas to live. However, there are some new competitors, in the south of the city and along the Jing-Tong Expressway, while the new Fourth Ring Road and soon to completed light railway mean that parts of town once considered inconvenient in terms of location, are becoming increasingly viable alternatives.

CBD - Expensive and too developed

The average price for residential space in and around the CBD is presently 8,900 yuan per square meter; second only to Yansha (Lufthansa region). Since the government released the plan for the CBD, the price has continued to climb, meaning only the most affluent can consider purchasing a home there.

Asian Games Village - A glut of used apartments

There is a lack of businesses and employment opportunities in the Asian Games Village area. Also there is as yet no comprehensive transportation network. In the coming three years, developers will put another 5 million square meters of accommodation on the market.

Zhongguancun - Poor Traffic conditions and lack of Business Facilities

Drivers describe the traffic situation in Haidian District as "no way in, no way out". Zhongguancun is located in the center of the deadlock. As the future Silicon Valley of China, Zhongguancun also needs more business facilities. Without international conglomerates based there, it cannot be a real Silicon Valley. To make it an international hi-tech center, the government does not allow the building of residential projects in the area. Thus the supply will not meet the increasing demand and prices will no doubt skyrocket.

"HOUSING" welcome your feedback: What kind of difficulties do you encounter when looking for housing in Beijing? What kind of information do you need? What can we help you with?
Our E-mail: jianrong@ynet.com
Tel: 65902522 Fax: 65902525

Rent A Local Apartment

by Wang Dandan

"Living in and adapting to Beijing is not an easy task when you are newly arrived expatriate", says James Greven, an employee of company engaged in TV programming. Greven now lives in a small apartment in Changchun Street.

He rented this house through a friend, and up to now, has encountered no problems with it. In the past, all foreigners were generally required to live in foreigner-approved housing.

However, the policy has been relaxed recently, meaning that provided you get approval from the district police station, together with the certification of the Beijing Public Security Bureau, you can rent a local residential house or apartment.

Greven says his neighbors are all very kind, and help him a lot when he first moved in. Because the house had not been lived for a long time, the water pipe had rusted. As is a common many such apart-

ment buildings, there was no property management team, however his neighbors phoned the district family committee, the smallest unit of Chinese government, and within a few minutes, a plumber arrived. He quickly replaced the pipe and Greven was able to move in.

Greven did not go through all the proper procedures to rent his house. He simply made a registration at the family committee, but did not register at the district police station, as the owner said it was too much trouble and didn't want to pay the registration fee. Asked what he would do if one day, the police come to check his registration? Greven smiled and said, "I will register. I do not think it is too late".

However, according to an officer at the Hujialou police station in Chaoyang district, when the police find a foreigner living in an apartment without having registered at the district police station, they will take certain measures, such as ask him to vacate the premises or pay a fine. He detailed the procedures a foreigner must go through when renting a local apartment, which do not seem to be too troublesome.

First, you must ask the district police station if you are allowed to live in the apartment that you are going to rent. They will check on the owner to see if he is legally approved to let his house. Then they will give you a written permission to live in the area. You must take this permission to

the foreign affairs office of the Beijing Public Security Bureau to change the address on your residential permit (green card) to the new one. Remember, without a residential permit, you cannot rent a house at all. With the revised residential card, you go back to the police station with the house owner who must sign a security guarantee and fill out the necessary registration forms.

After all this, you can legally move into your rented, non-foreigner approved apartment.



Picture by Li Yue

Business Service 商务服务



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Exhibitions

The Big Foot Carved Stone (大足石刻). Precious relics from Chongqing on their first tour of China. Where: China History Museum, east side of Tian'anmen Square. When: till July 25, 8:30am-5pm. Admission: 20 yuan. Tel: 65128321.

Entering the Hutong An exhibition of Cong Ajun's (从阿军) oil paintings. The beauty of traditional architecture in Beijing's hutongs, captured on canvas. Where: Florence Gallery (佛罗伦萨画廊), 2 Dongsanhuanbeilu (North East Third Ring Road), Chaoyang District. When: till July 8 (closed Mondays), 10am-6pm. Tel: 64683665.

Bevy of beauties Tong Zhengang's (童振刚) works attach great importance to the simple and pure beauty of women. Both traditional and modern Chinese artistic atmosphere can be enjoyed here. Where: A 38, Fangcaodibei (Fangcaodi), 28,43,120 to Fangcaodi, on the west side of the road. When: Now till July 12, 10am-7pm. Tel: 65074062.



Exhibition of Etching It's the last two days of this half-month-long exhibition in which



city (首都师范大学). When: June 29-30 Tel: 68465056.

New Blue/White Porcelain Show (青花瓷) One of the most well known forms of porcelain in China. This exhibition mainly displays new blue and white porcelain works with creative models. Where: Nangao (南皋路), Nangao village, Chaoyang District, bus 402 to Nangao. HAP Pottery Gallery (乐陶苑陶艺廊). When: Now-July 22. Tel: 64331800.

International Exhibition of Sports Instruments Various sports instruments including famous brands of sports clothes, shoes and equipment from all over the world will be on show in this grand exhibition. Where: 6, Beisanhuandong, Chaoyang District, China International Exhibition Center (国展), bus 801,18,302 to Jing'an (静安庄). When: July 5-8. Tel: 84602070.

the works of contemporary young artists are on show. Where: 105, Xisanhuanbeilu, the exhibition center of Department of fine arts, Capital Normal University.

Activities

Learn to paint a Beijing Opera face Organized by the Chinese Culture Club and conducted by artists from the Peking Opera. Conducted in English. Where: The dressing room of Liyuan Theater (梨园剧场), Qianmen Hotel, 175 Yong An Lu, Xuanwu District. When: Saturday, June 30, 2:30-5pm. Admission: free. Tel: 84622081, 63016688-8860

1st Anniversary of Flamingo Bar Singers who featured on the Imitation Show of Beijing cable TV will perform. There will be a fashion show and live music. Where: Flamingo Bar, 8 Gongtibeilu opposite Zhaolong Hotel, Chaoyang District. When: Friday,

June 29, 5pm-4am. Admission: Free. Tel: 65324053.

DVD, VCD Exchange Exchange your unwanted DVDs, VCDs and posters. Mostly local or from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan. Where: On Off Restaurant & Bar (上下线酒吧), 1F Lianbao Apartments (联宝公寓) Xingfucun Zhonglu, Chaoyang District. Bus 115, 118 or 113 to Gongrentiyuguan (Workers Stadium). When: Sunday, July 1, 3pm-7pm. Admission: 10 yuan (free if you buy a beverage). Tel: 64158083

Summer tennis camp for kids aged 5 to 14. Program includes: 15 hours of comprehensive tennis instruction, swimming, lunch, fun drills and games, photos, prizes. Where to register: Splash Recreation Club, Sino-Swiss Hotel (中瑞饭店). When: 2nd-

6th July, 13th-17th August, 20th-24th August and 27th-31st August. Tel: 13641332234

Traffic

Roadwork Announcement Xizhimenwai Dajie (西直门外大街) Xueyuanlu (学院路), from Xizhimen-qiao (西直门桥) to Lishuqiao (立水桥) The major project of the building of Liangguang Dajie (两广大街), from Guang'anmen (广安门) to Guangqumen (广渠门), Xizhimenwai Dajie and Xueyuanlu will be finished in July.

By Jiao Pei, Li Dan
We are glad to receive your feedback. You can email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 65902522

Music

Our Troop Following The Sun

Performed by the PLA's Orchestra & Choir, a commemoration of the 80th birthday of the CCP. Where: Minorities Cultural Palace Theater (民族宫剧院), 49 Fuxingmennei Dajie Xicheng District. When: June 29-July 1, 7:30pm. Admission: 60-320 yuan. Tel: 66022530.

Jazz from The Netherlands The Willem Breuker Kollektief (WBK爵士乐团), founded in the 1970's, will present their unique performance style and humorous expressive ways. It is their 3rd visit China. Where: The Loft (藏酷), Gongtibeilu Chaoyang District. When: Friday, Saturday, June 29, 30, 7:30pm. Admission: 100 yuan. Tel: 65017501

Dada Perform Live Dada is a hot new Beijing pop band starring four handsome guys. You can hear them perform all their songs next Saturday at On Off Bar. Be

sure to book in advance, as there are only 300 tickets available. Where: On Off Bar, 1st floor of Lianbao Apartments, Xingfuzhonglu, Chaoyang District. When: July 7, 8:30pm. Tickets: 50 yuan. Booking: 64158083 (12:00 noon-2am).

Mix Music at Orange Dj from Europe will play House. Where: Orange, 2, #10 Alley Xingfucun Chaoyang District. When: Saturday, Sunday, June 30, July 1, 8pm till late. Admission: free. Tel: 64157413.

Rock at Get Lucky Bar Wei (微) and Aiyue Duke (爱乐公爵) will perform on June 29. Cold Blooded Animals, who have just released their first CD on Jingwen Records, will play their on June 30. Where: Get Lucky Bar, Taiyanggong (太阳宫), east of the south gate of University of International Business and Economics (经贸大学), near Taiyang Market. When: Friday, Saturday, June 29, 30, 9pm. Admission: 30 yuan (including one beverage) 20 yuan for students. Tel: 64299109.



Weather

WEEKEND

Saturday, 30 June
Cloudy to overcast, showers
Max: 28C. Min: 18C.
Sunday, 1 July
Overcast / showers
Max: 26C. Min: 19C.

NEXT WEEK

Monday, 2 July
Overcast / showers
Max: 26C. Min: 18C.
Tuesday, 3 July
Overcast / showers
Max: 30C. Min: 22C.



Wednesday, 4 July
Cloudy to clear
Max: 33C. Min: 21C.



Thursday, 5 July
Clear / cloudy
Max: 33C. Min: 21C.



Friday, 6 July
Clear to cloudy
Max: 32C. Min: 21C.



Saturday, June 30th
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Sunday, July 1st
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6856.9388

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6528.0932

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by Wen Long

After being imprisoned in the dull office for three rainy days, I desperately needed to get outdoors to stretch my cramped bones. That desk, chair and PC threatened to drive me crazy. Swimming was what I needed, and not in any indoor pool, I'd had enough of ceilings, even if it was above a swimming pool. I remembered I'd seen some people taking a scuba diving course once at my local swimming pool. Diving! Hang on a minute ...! A call to Dragon's Ocean International Diving Club got a positive response; they had a special promotion project called 'Discover Scuba' at Ten Ferries (there are 10 ferries on the Jumahe River). All I needed was to bring swimming trunks with me.

Sun and Sand

After an hour's drive on the Jingshi Expressway (京石高速) and another forty minutes along a country road, I arrived at the Sixth Ferry of the Ten Ferries in Fangshan County (房山) at half past ten. The Jumahe River flows east here and swings around in a big, slow curve. On either side of the river stand pine-covered mountains. The water is

light green and clean, and there were dozens of bamboo boats and ten or so motorboats moored along the bank. On the south bank are four restaurants, two hotels and a row of rooms under construction. The north bank of the river is covered with yellow sand. Though I did wonder whether the sand beach was man-made or natural, the doubt didn't hinder my enjoyment of it, and I lost no time in kicking off my shoes, and rushing down to sprawl on the sand in the warm morning sun.

The club and a local tourism company are working jointly to develop the area. They have named the place 'Oriental Hawaii' on account of the sun and golden sand. Hawaii struck me as perhaps a little bit of an exaggeration, there are certainly no palm trees, and the sand only covers a very short distance. But I'm not going to quibble, and anyway, my diving course was about to begin!

The instructor came. He handed me the most important piece of diving equipment, a yellow aluminum 16kg compressed air tank. I gave it a once over, as best I could while clutching it to my chest. Ok, at least I could carry it on my back. Then came the mask, flippers, snorkel, buoyancy vest and of course, the wet suit. "Can you swim?" He asked me. "Yeah, I can swim 100 meters", I replied truthfully. "Well it makes no difference whether you can swim or not, you're just a beginner in diving, so listen to me carefully!" His strict instructions were delivered in a thick Shandong accent.

The mask was connected with the snorkel already; he put it on my head and taught me how to get water out of it when in the water,

stressing that it was very important to keep your mask clear, "or you might become tangled in the water plants". This was very easy; I just used one hand to press the top of the mask, while exhaling at the same time. The air pressure would squeeze the water out. Then he taught me to use my mouth to breathe. Could you imagine anything easier than this in the world? When I have a cold and my nose is blocked, I breathe through my mouth! "Why are you keeping me on land doing these stupid exercises?" I said under my breath, let's get on with it!

The Marvelous Underwater World

With the instructor's help, I put on the wet suit, mask, flippers and a belt weighted with four pieces of lead. I felt like a slave in ancient Rome (I know, I know, slaves in ancient Rome tended not to go scuba diving, but if they had done, I know exactly how they would have felt). Then we waded into the river and the instructor told me to squat in the water. What were they going to do? Suddenly I felt an enormous weight and I almost toppled backwards into the water. They had put the air tank on my back! Now I was carrying 40 kg of the full set equipment and could barely move. This was a little more exercise than I had bargained for!

Once the instructor had donned a similar suit of armor, we headed together towards the middle of the river. I put the snorkel in my mouth, bit it tightly, and fell forward into the river with my eyes wide open. Once in the water, I felt a great sense of relief. The buoyancy lifted the air tank up and I could move freely again. I kicked my legs and swam forward, watching surprised fish darting out of

my way. I could touch the bottom of the river, I was in a quiet but wonderful world.

The compressed air made me feel thirsty and itch developed in my throat that quickly became unbearable. I had to rise out of the water to gulp down several breathes of fresh air.

The instructor told me this was common with beginners. It just takes a little time to become accustomed to the compressed air. After several minutes, I was underwater again, and this time I stayed there for half an hour. The sunlight looked gloomy in the green water. Though I'd often held my breath to swim underwater for short periods, I had never experienced such a feeling of total freedom in water before. The fear of drowning still existed when swimming. But with the heavy air tank on my back, I was afraid of nothing, except maybe a shark.

The depth of the river at Ten Ferries is no more than six meters, and the safety depth for 'Discover Scuba' is within seven meters. The club charges 280 yuan for the one session (about an hour in the water.) The instructors all have the CMAS (Confederation Mondiale Activites Scubaquatiques) certificate. The total expenditure for diving enthusiasts to qualify for the certificate will not exceed 3,000 yuan (US\$360 or so) and it is accepted in the most countries around the world.

By the way, the Dragon's Ocean Diving Club will officially open their 'Discover Scuba' resort to the public on Saturday, June 30, with various festivities including a motorboat show.

Beijing Dragon's Ocean International Diving Club (龙缘潜水) Add: Room 311, Juhengyuan (聚亨缘) Building, No.1 Heping Xijie (和平西街), Chaoyang District Bus: 830 to Hepingli Tel: 84270778/79

Duck into the Deep Water



Diving with Sharks

Beijing now has three aquariums. Beijing Aquarium is the largest, Blue Zoo has the longest underwater tunnel; and Taipingyang (Pacific) Underwater World features sharks, penguins and seals. Blue Zoo and Taipingyang also offer scuba diving. Some of the staff can speak English and printed explanations are provided in both English and Chinese.

Taipingyang (Pacific) Underwater World

Covering a total area of 7,000 square meters, the aquarium is located at the base of the CCTV Tower. It features an underwater walkway, 80 meters long and with a 270-degree viewing angle. The star attractions here are some of the world's few remaining Humboldt penguins. Originally from Peru, these lively aquatic creatures face possible extinction due to the loss of their natural habitats.

Taipingyang Underwater World offers candle-lit dinners in the underwater walkway from Friday to Sunday. Dinner costs 108 yuan each for adults and 78 yuan for children. Dinner price includes admission. For 60 yuan extra, you can take a genuine pearl home with you. The cost for an hour of diving here is a little cheaper, at 300 yuan.



Where: Taipingyang (Pacific) Underwater World, 1/F, China Cen-

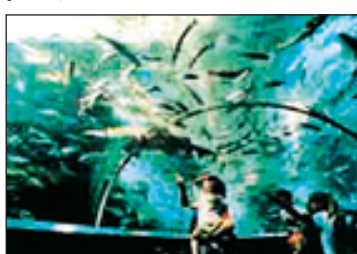
tral Television Tower, No.11, Xisanhuan Zhonglu (西三环中路), Haidian District. Bus: 374, 320, and 323 Admission: Adults, 60 yuan; children and over 60s, 40 yuan. Open: 9am-6:30pm (Mon-Fri); 8:30am-8pm (Sat-Sun). Tel: 68461172/73

Blue Zoo Beijing

Built entirely beneath the lake at Beijing Workers Stadium, Blue Zoo features some 6,000 tropical marine species, living in an artificial saltwater environment.

The zoo's 120-meter underwater tunnel is a moving walkway designed and prefabricated in New Zealand. On average, it only takes about 10 minutes for visitors to traverse the main body of water, but from the moment you enter, you are amidst a magnificent display of the world's most colorful and exotic fish.

On weekends, you can dine there at the seafood (of course!) restaurant. That too, is underwater, but don't worry, you won't get your feet or anything else wet. If you want to try it, make sure you make a reservation in advance. You can also pay 380 yuan, which includes admission fee, to spend an hour diving with a mermaid.



Where: Blue Zoo Beijing, Workers Stadium (工人体育馆) (South Gate), Chaoyang District. Subway: to Chaoyangmen then taking bus 110, 112, 109; Bus: 43, 113 Admis-

sion: Adults, 75 yuan; children, 50 yuan; toddlers under one meter and over 80s are admitted free. Open: 8am-8pm. Tel: 65913397/98

Beijing Aquarium

Though you can only watch with envy the staff here feeding the fish, Beijing Aquarium is well worth a visit. Located inside the Beijing Zoo, this aquarium is equipped with some of the most advanced facilities in the world.

Featured are thousands of marine species in various environments, allowing visitors to enjoy magical oceanic 'journeys' all year round. They include: Tidal Encounter - A pool containing starfish, sea slugs and much else to fascinate you. You can even tap a live turtle's shell just to let him know you are friendly (and have no wish to eat him).

Shark Aquarium - In the dark depths of the sea, you will see all kinds of sharks circling hungrily around you, and you will be very glad that this is not another diving lesson.

Where: B18, Gaoliangqiao Xijie (高粱桥斜街), Haidian Bus: 16, 105, and 103 Tel: 62176655 Open: 9am - 5pm Admission: Adults, 100 yuan; children, 50 yuan; toddlers under 1.2m and over 80s admitted free.



Bicycle Tours



Picture by Chen Guangzhong

Big Bell Temple

by Chen Guangzhong, Jiang Zhong

Da Zhong Si, or Big Bell Temple, was built in 1733. Originally called Jue Sheng Temple, it was renamed Da Zhong Si in 1743 when the Yong Le Bell was moved there from Wan Shou Temple.

The Big Bell Tower is the most important building of this temple. It is built on a cubic pedestal made of stone while the tower itself is of a round shape, symbolizing the integration of sky and earth. The big bell hanging from the vault of the tower was cast during the reign of Emperor Yong Le of the Ming Dynasty (1403-1424). It was said that casting the big bell was among the three most important projects carried out by the Emperor (the other two were building the Imperial Palace and the Temple of Heaven). This illustrates the importance with which the Big Bell was regarded. The Big Bell is 6.75 meters high, 3.3 meters in diameter at its widest point and weighs about 46.5 tons. It was cast with 230,000 characters of Buddhist script. The bell's ring can be heard from a great distance, and the reverberations take three minutes to completely fade away. Also, various tones can be heard in its ring. The big bolt from which the heavy bell is hung is one meter in length but only six centimeters in width.

The tower that houses the Big Bell is itself a precious wonder. Because of the great weight of the bell, it cannot hang directly from a single beam with either end supported on a column. To solve the problem, craftsmen built three beams to divert the weight. The eight columns used to support the beams tilt to the center of the bell, which contributes greatly to the stabilization of the whole complex. An octagonal pool 70 centimeters in depth and 4 meters in diameter was built on the stone pedestal. The distance between the upper rim of the pool and the bell is about 1 meter. The design of the pool contributes to resonance of the bell.

Ancient bells from across the nation have been collected and exhibited in the Big Bell Temple Museum since its foundation in 1984. The categories of the exhibition include: Origins of Ancient Bells, History of Ancient Bells, Buddhist Scripts on the Big Bell, Photos and Information about Foreign Famous Bells and Clocks and the Manufacturing Methods of Ancient Bells.

As an imperial temple, the Big Bell Temple is well worth a visit. The main buildings of the temple, such as the Main Gate, the Bell and Drum Towers, Heavenly King Hall, the Precious Hall of the Great Hero and the Back Hall are all well preserved.

Where: 31, Beisanhuan Xilu. Bus: 320 to People's University, then change to bus 367, 379 to Da Zhong Si (大钟寺). Open: 8:30am-4:40pm daily. Admission: 10 yuan.